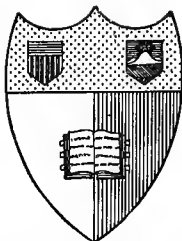


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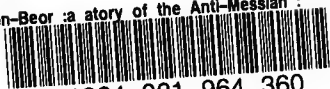
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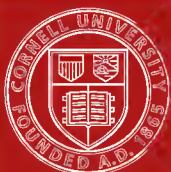
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BEN-BEOR.

A STORY OF THE ANTI-MESSIAH.

IN TWO DIVISIONS.

PART I.—LUNAR INTAGLIOS.

THE MAN IN THE MOON,

A COUNTERPART OF WALLACE'S "BEN HUR."

PART II.—HISTORICAL PHANTASMAGORIA.

THE WANDERING GENTILE,

A COMPANION ROMANCE TO SUE'S "WANDERING JEW."

MAN
BY

H. M. BIEN,

Author of "Oriental Legends," "Feast of Lights," "Samson," "Purim," etc.

VICKSBURG, MISS.

BALTIMORE:

PRESS OF ISAAC FRIEDENWALD CO.

1891. ✓

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TO HIS LORDSHIP,
BARON DE HIRSCH,
THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS
AND
COSMOPOLITAN PHILANTHROPIST,
THIS VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.
BY
HIS DEVOTED AND FAITHFUL ADMIRER,
THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

“*Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht.*”

The history of civilization, culminating in the successful establishment of the Republic of the United States of America with her immense possibilities, is as important as it is interesting.

To the investigator of human nature it becomes patent that during all the past ages powerful agencies have been systematically working to suppress the rights and liberties of the people; upholding serfdom and superstition for the benefit of a few privileged classes.

Well may these persecutors and haters of man be called as a unit “*The Anti-Messiah,*” whose story under the name of “BEN-BEOR”—a well-known biblical character, “BALAAM BEN-BEOR” (see Numbers xxii. 5—O. T.)—is represented in the following pages.

Incidentally interwoven with the ultimate overthrow of the “foul conspirator” are the fate and leading events of that strange remnant of nations, “the Jews.” This story will relate the important part played by them, even in their humiliation, as a mysteriously divine power to help on the slow but sure progress of the steadily coming ideal millennium,

“when the nations shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks.”

Volumes have been written as history proper, of continuous data and events. To such the author of this story is largely indebted for the groundwork material wrought into this novel. *The sources from whence this information had to be garnered are too numerous for giving credit by name in each instance. Sincere thanks are hereby tendered to one and all.* But the reading masses at this time do not take kindly to the bulky literature of the student; preferring to be taught *en passant*, in more interesting and lighter ways, by books clothed in the attractive garb of romance, introducing into them the important records of the past.

A large number of original historical documents, attainable to professional research only, are embodied in the following work.

Such an effort is attempted in this novel.

The book is divided into two parts, each one representing the mysterious person, the “Anti-Messiah,” around which the interest of the events to be related centers and is carried along.

These are subdivided into smaller episodes, each complete in itself, and yet so connected as to form one unique whole.

May the humble trial of this peculiar authorship find ardent friends and lenient critics.

Such is the fervent hope and wish of

Yours devotedly,

THE AUTHOR.

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PART I.

LUNAR INTAGLIOS.

THE MAN IN THE MOON.

A STORY

TRANSLATED FROM HEBREW INSCRIPTIONS
FOUND ON AN AEROLITE

BY

A RECLUSE OF THE MOUNTAINS

THE FINDING OF THE MANUSCRIPTS.

The editor and publisher owes it to the readers of "Ben Beor" to explain how he came into possession of the manuscripts containing that story. During a destructive conflagration which ravaged the part of New York where he was domiciled, he had the misfortune to lose an extensive and valuable library. This made it necessary for him to commence anew to collect books, the tools of his profession. Ever alert now for this object, the following advertisement in one of the great dailies attracted his instant attention :

"For Sale: A large number of second-hand books. Will be disposed of at a bargain, as the owner requires the room of their present storage. Apply, etc., etc."

Repairing to the address given, a large commercial establishment of the city, after a short examination of the volumes, a bargain was struck, and the complete library of a Hebrew theologian, "Rabbi Perez Mendes," transferred to the shelves of the new purchaser. The original owner of these literary treasures, who had officiated for many years as the minister of a leading Jewish congregation, was dead. His only daughter, Judith, had been married to one of the merchant princes of the metropolis. She too had departed this life. Her bereaved husband became the owner of these books. A fine financier and successful importer, the otherwise excellent man had no literary tastes, and the library taking up a great deal of house-room, was packed into boxes and sent for storage to his

warehouse. Here the collection was found to be in the way also, and so it was sold. One of the cases had been filled with written matter, no doubt of great importance to its owner, but useless and of no value to any one else. Sketches of sermons, outlines for learned disquisitions, and some abstruse linguistic studies made up the greater part of the papers.

At the bottom of this case, however, carefully preserved, were found two immense rolls of manuscripts. These naturally excited the finder's curiosity. On opening, and perusing the contents, which occupied several days, he was rewarded with the discovery of one of the most quaint and absorbing narratives imaginable. Believing that others would be delighted, amused and instructed by what seems more than the hallucinations of the over-excited brain of the author—"A Recluse of the Mountains,"—the complete story is here laid before an intelligent and cultured reading world.

A STRANGE PRELIMINARY EPISODE.

THE FALL OF THE AEROLITE.

Near the southeastern boundary of New York, at the foot of Mount Riga, in early times, there existed a great natural wonder. It was a cavern or passageway into the mountain. Its opening resembled a roughly cut doorway into a great rock. A diminutive stream of water trickled down from the heights through this opening. The way into the cave was a sharp downward incline, in the shadow of giant trees, and among ugly looking boulders, strewn around as if by some mighty volcanic upheaval. Viewed from the bottom and

looking up from its deep recesses, it appears as though there had once been a narrow chasm, but by some mighty eruptive disturbance, sending huge masses downward, the rocks had met at the top, and partly filling the opening, left but a treacherous footpath through it all.

Here, towards the end of the summer in the year 1776, a strange event transpired. It is midnight. A dense darkness prevails. Ever since noon, heavy, ominous clouds have hung over this region. Suddenly the storm bursts forth in all its fury. A tornado of wind drives the rain in sheets over the drenched ground. Incessant flashes of lightning cross the skies. Amidst the uninterrupted roll of thunder can be heard the fall of majestic oaks, snapped like saplings by the storm.

Far away on the horizon, amidst the screeching and howling of the elements, a spark of fire appears. As it circles nearer and nearer it increases in size and luminosity. It lights up the murky sky for miles. At its swift approach the revolt of nature increases, as if to herald the nearing of the startling phenomenon.

On comes the ball of fire, increasing in intensity. A train of sparks, looking as if millions of stars had been hurled from above, accompanies the flaming stranger.

The place from which I, "The Recluse of the Mountains," had intently observed this atmospheric commotion, is the entrance of the cave, at the foot of this declivity, where I now dwell. Terrified, I fly to my subterranean abode. The celestial visitor of midnight strikes the earth with a deafening crash, right at my door, thereby making a prisoner of me—walled in, as it were, in the bowels of the earth. In my consternation, I did not at first comprehend my horrible situation; but the intense

heat of the monster-meteor, as I now saw the fiery body to be, soon brought me to my senses. What am I to do?—aged and feeble, with no other tools than yonder spade and hammer! Should I be spared a fearful death by being roasted alive, my provisions will soon give out and I must die of starvation. Was ever man so terribly situated?

Thick beads of perspiration drip from my forehead. In my frenzied despair I snatch the hammer. Scarcely knowing what I do, I approach the boulder, and with all the power left in my withered arms, strike. Am I awake, or is all this a dream? As if by magic, the monster which holds me imprisoned falls to pieces. In my joy at being released from my awful predicament, I did not at first notice that the aerolite had broken into long, even slabs. As soon, however, as I became aware of it, irrepressible curiosity took possession of me. I approach the debris and examine the plates by their own light. They are red-hot. One of them lies with its inside surface turned directly towards me. I can scarcely believe my eyes: it is covered from top to bottom with writing—characters which I recognize to be Hebrew. I now proceed with great caution to make egress and ingress possible. It is daylight when, with my few utensils, I succeed in removing the obstacles out of my way by carefully drawing them inside of my cave. Spread out as the parts lay there, it took several days before they cooled sufficiently to be easily handled. All were numbered, and therefore easily arranged in consecutive order.

I am impatient to commence the work of translating the strange inscriptions into the English language. Once perfectly familiar with the vernacular of the Scriptures, it is years since I had occasion to use it. I must obtain the necessary books

to refresh my memory. This is a difficult task. Procuring a trusty messenger, one who had done errands for me before, I gave him written instructions and despatched him to the city. When at last he returned, he brought some old, worm-eaten tomes—a Hebrew Pentateuch, grammar and dictionary. And now there commenced for me the absorbing study of the intricacies and irregularities of the Oriental tongue. The worry with these, and my impatience to unravel the mysteries on the plates, were so engrossing that I forgot everything else—yea, as it will be shown in the sequel, my own identity. It became a mania, a perfect hallucination, straining the tension of my mind to its utmost.

At the expiration of a long time—I cannot now tell the number of weeks and months—I felt competent to commence my ardent labors. From the very start, the story therein revealed became so entrancing, so absorbing that I did not rest until the whole record on the meteor was completely translated. The precious sheets, which came to me so strangely, are certainly the hugest intaglios in existence, and embody, as I shall give it here, the full history of that mystic person called “THE MAN IN THE MOON.”

INTAGLIO THE FIRST.

ON, TO THE MOON.

Herewith is submitted an account of events which recently transpired here, on the Moon; inclusive of authentic testimony relating thereto; inscribed by duly authorized experts, upon plates of jasper, in my native tongue, the holy Hebrew language.

These were delivered to me, the Prophet Elijah, after being collected with greatest care by the official scribes, on command of their royal master. The leaves of stone, now carefully cemented together, I shall send earthward through space, from this planet, the Moon; trusting that they may safely reach at the appointed time my native globe. May it then be vouchsafed that some sagacious and learned person find them. Such a one will discover that the apparently solid block consists of finely divided slabs, on which he may read a full account of a fierce and most terrific rebellion, suppressed by me, which threatened to destroy and perhaps utterly annihilate this lunar hemisphere, and also, as seemed most likely, of a large portion of the inhabited earth and stellar worlds.

These celestial annals will constitute an eternal warning to all ambitious malefactors and wicked, crafty schemers; teaching them the supreme lesson that a higher Power forever rules and watches over the destinies of the universe, which no audacious interference may thwart or ungodly opposition can annul.

Know then that the fiery chariot in which I was so mysteriously and miraculously translated from the abode of human mortals, a detailed account of which is given in sacred scripture (2 Kings xi.), rose from my Palestinian fatherland, steadily and with measureless velocity, through the endless spheres. The wonderful vehicle must have appeared to my astounded disciples like a flaming monster. Propelled by the power of two enormous wings, it carried me upward with ease and comfort. I lost all knowledge of time and space, and ceased to feel the wants and necessities of my former nature. Thus I drifted along, experiencing the most delightful sensations.

Many, many years of mundane reckoning must have elapsed, when at last I came in sight of a luminous heavenly body. Nearer and nearer I approached. As the distance decreased, views, gorgeous in beauty and splendor, appeared on this orb. I could distinguish mountains, lit up on their tops with a sheen of silver, rubies and roses. Shortly after, oceans, lakes and rivers came in sight, forming indescribable combinations of brilliant colors. Valleys came into view, where grew trees, the grandeur of whose foliage exceeded anything I had ever seen. I soon also beheld plains studded with a luxuriant growth of vegetation and flowers, beautiful beyond all mortal imagination, and whose perfumes, superlatively sweet and exhilarating, already reached me. Amidst these I sighted a colossal, seemingly endless semicircle of heaven-towering buildings, whose roofs and spires glistened in the morning sun like columns of porphyry studded with diamonds and sapphires. From my yet dizzy height I saw a public square extending for miles. This was black in many places with stirring, fiercely fighting, wildly gesticulating creatures. As I came still nearer I noticed that their furious combat abruptly ceased. I perceived also that the contestants resembled my own kind, but were of a ghastly, fierce and combative nature. At last my chariot landed right in the centre of the circle. One army of the heaving, shouting multitude made ready to throw itself frantically upon my person, when he who seemed to be leader of the other party of warriors, exercising all his authority and energy, protected me from them.

I alighted from my chariot, and as I set my feet on the apparently solid ground, I felt a peculiar rebounding sensation at every step. It seemed as if I was carried involuntarily forward. However,

there was no time granted me for any special observation. The august leader, after a short consultation, advanced with his followers, close to where I had halted. By an instantaneous inspiration I, according to our Oriental fashion, bowed myself repeatedly and deeply to the ground. Imitating my example, he and his host also, and in the same manner, made obeisances. Imagine my great astonishment when their chief addressed to me, in correct and fluent biblical Hebrew, the following greeting:

“Hail, illustrious messenger of the Lord! Welcome to the Moon! Thy coming has been foretold in our annals and traditions. The Holy One be glorified, that He hath vouchsafed to let us behold thee face to face. Know then, we have long awaited thee. At no time could thy arrival among the children of the ‘Levanah’ (Moon) have been more opportune and welcome than on this day, for we are in great need, trouble and anxiety. Often have we cried out unto the Lord for mercy and aid, and have lifted up our eyes unto the endless heights whence shall come our help. Blessed be thy coming among us, and may be blessed thy dwelling in our midst!”

These words sounded to me, not like human speech, but like the notes from a trumpet. As soon as he had concluded, his attendants, from beneath their magnificent garbs, produced small, opaline instruments, and placing them to their lips, they brought forth such strains of melodious music as never before had greeted human ears.

Then marching ahead, their chief placed his arm in mine and led me triumphantly into a magnificent edifice which stood conspicuously out in grandeur and beauty from all the rest. Close as he was to me, I could not feel his touch; but by some

unknown influence I was impelled forward with a motion which resembled the modulated heaving to and fro of a well-trained camel. We soon entered the portals of the gorgeous palace of him whom I learned to be titled "Melech Halvanah." The whole imperial establishment, with its fabulous wealth, comfort, and a countless retinue of servants, was placed at my disposal. The chief then informed me that he and his people considered me of divine authority, and that as such I was now constituted their highest judicial tribune. Oral and documentary evidence would at the earliest possible moment be brought before me. This appertained to a stirring and ominous event—a revolution—now agitating all the lunar inhabitants. I was to finally adjudge the transgressors.

A sovereign proclamation was at once issued to every part of the satellite, for the purpose of immediately assembling the inhabitants, to give testimony and hear judgment.

It was now night. A semi-darkness, which follows gradually the brilliancy of a long day, bringing out in magnificent splendor all the visible constellations of the horizon. As I stand in one of the huge porticoes of this palace, gazing heavenwards, I behold with amazement what I believe to be the earth. Resembling a gigantic ball of polished steel, it sweeps through the spheres in majestic grandeur. But most bewildering and overwhelming is the appearance in that section of the sky where the sun has lately disappeared. There, at this instant, the sky is lit up like an iridescent crown, from which extend longer or shorter volumes of rays, now one-colored, blending white; now in all the brilliant hues and tints of a rainbow, enveloping the gorgeous landscape in a sheen and halo of supreme glory.

INTAGLIO THE SECOND.

THE ROYAL PROCLAMATION.

We, Melech and Malkah, King and Queen of the Moon, with strange and deeply apprehensive emotions for which our speech yields no fitting expression, issue this our sacred and regal proclamation, for the purpose of exposing the causes of the revolutionary state in our realm:

We command that from the ranks of our imperial scribes a number of the most distinguished for diction, erudition and skill be hereby commissioned to indite upon imperishable material, at the will and pleasure of our Messianic messenger, sent to us by the Father of the universe, the full text of this our sovereign mandate, together with such testimony and evidence as will be given by the chiefs and sages of our people, relative to our present condition. Let our confidential counselors and advisers appear and fully relate the awful events which have resulted in the present dangerous attitude among our subjects.

To this time, before the thoughts of our people were disturbed by non-lunar agitations and agitators, ours was a condition without grief, sorrow or envy. Here we are placed on probation, to redeem ourselves gradually, and be re-accepted by the great Father, whom in our existence in a former life we had offended. From time immemorial, all who have been privileged to rise to this preliminary state of atonement have steadily and conscientiously labored to attain the object of their ultimate reconciliation with our Creator. This task of merciful redemption continued until—woe to the hour!—a person crafty, skilful, learned and unregenerated came among us. Disappointed ambition and jealous passion were rekindled in him

soon after his arrival. Traitor and rebel, he incessantly has tried to seduce our unwary people into his wicked schemes. The first evidence of his retrogression was by his inventing and constructing a huge eye-tube, with great magnifying power. He must have learned this art from the "astrologers of earth," perverting the beneficent use of advanced science there, to his own selfish plans and objects here. For this purpose he utilized the crystallized rocks of our mountains. On one of the highest eminences which tower over this city he had erected his observatory, and from there learned whatever transpires on earth, communicating industriously the guilty knowledge to the eager, listening and excited people. Permission to erect these buildings had been obtained by false and hypocritical representations. The vacillating multitude had been continually informed, for a revolutionary purpose, which he had most cunningly devised, of whatever was going on over yonder on the mundane sphere, in whose wake our lunar globe follows. A great many of you, our people, were thus led astray by this arch-fiend, who schemed to use you for vengeance on your sovereigns. Your sleeping passions awakened, and your curiosity inflamed, you gloat greedily on all the folly, sin and crime transpiring continually on our terrestrial neighbor. By this wicked waste of your energies, your dormant mortal vices have been re-aroused, and these have caused among us a perilous state of revolutionary commotion. With the ordinary means at our command, we can no longer control the mutiny. Newcomers continually arriving, as heretofore, shadow-creatures like ourselves, yet in the lowest state of spiritual development, instead of falling into line to work out by slow degrees the task of regaining their lost

perfection, now join blindly our ungovernable, rebellious subjects.

Worse than this, the same scheming brain which produced that ill-omened eye-tube has lately discovered and mixed chemicals of the most terrific explosive power. We were in duty bound to forcibly seize and confiscate them. Experiments made in our presence prove conclusively that with a sufficient quantity of this new, hitherto unknown compound, a large portion of the visible universe might be blown into atoms. We have caused this dangerous person to be held in solitary confinement. A large quantity of the terrible substance which he manufactured has been carefully concealed, and the place of its storage watched day and night by trusty servants. The knowledge of the existence of this murderous mixture has gotten abroad, and even now you, our unruly people, are plotting to gain possession of it and thereby overthrow our power. This accomplished, you mean then to destroy the largest portion of our planetary neighbors, and making slaves of the rest, appropriate to yourselves all their possessions.

In our sacred annals and by long tradition it has been foretold that such an inevitable crisis must surely come upon us, but that in the hour of greatest peril a sublunar messenger, sent direct by Providence, would avert a crime, the commission of which would forever doom us to eternal damnation. The prophecy is now fulfilled! In the very hour of our greatest need, when the combat for our overthrow is upon us, the divine ambassador of the Lord hath arrived!

We therefore, by the power vested in us, as your King and Queen, command that all our subjects, inclusive of our chiefs and counselors, shall forthwith appear before the great Prophet in the public

square before our palace, with such evidence, testimony and annals as shall enable him fairly and impartially to pronounce judgment. So that his will, as the will of the All-Father, be done!

Signed, sealed and promulgated in this first period of the heavenly messenger's arrival.

MELECH HALVANAH,
MALKAH L'VANAH.

INTAGLIO THE THIRD.

THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT.

In obedience to and conformity with your royal mandate and proclamation, O gracious Melech and Malkah, and for the people and counselors of state here assembled, and with delight and satisfaction, no less than great apprehension, I, the Prime Minister of State, appear before thee, divine messenger of the Lord, in my own behalf as well as that of my associates and fellow-officers. I hope and pray that thy auspicious presence among us may be the signal for allaying the fearful disturbances now threatening this realm. May it restore to our good and benignant rulers and their turbulent subjects the beneficent peace, harmony and good-will which have existed here beyond the memory of the oldest generation, but which now are greatly endangered.

I came to this sphere from a dark abode, where I had been consigned to atone for my cruelty and a despotic exercise of power, in life on earth, the maledicted king, Rameses of Egypt, who enslaved a free people. After an immeasurable time of purification, by untold terrible sufferings below, I rose at last to the ameliorated condition vouchsafed

to the repentant offenders on this moon-sphere. Here I was elevated by degrees to the exalted office of Counselor of State. Cheerfully do I now come forward to testify as to what I know authoritatively concerning the subject at issue. Foremost I bear witness, that during the long period in which I have been attached to this court, my beloved, worshipped sovereigns have, by their mild rules, regulations and best of laws, created a government the like of which can be found only among the angels who throng around the throne of the Lord. The freest exercise of liberty, secured by the participation of all classes in devising and framing the codes of legislation, produces that happy state of affairs which brings about mutual good-will between rulers and subjects. Nowhere is there any cause for discontent.

All have the blessed privilege of living in fraternal relations, enjoying universal equality and freedom, and the possible advance and elevation of the individual. In fact, the reigning powers are simply executive chiefs. They share responsibility and labors with trusted and well-proven ministers. The only right reserved to them exclusively is to declare inoperative any ordinance which without mature consideration has been enacted.

The great underlying principle of our government consists in steadily advancing all classes assigned to this sphere to the once lost favor of our Maker. The pardoning power is vested as a prerogative in the throne. It happens seldom, and in only isolated cases, that a turbulent spirit, under rash impulses, becomes refractory and liable to legal penalties. The high privileges of their majesties may then forgive freely and generously, restoring the erring to their former condition, if the offender truly repents and petitions for pardon.

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stern lesson, that it is man's part to do and woman's to suffer. Clasped in the heaven of his embrace, I nevertheless trembled on the very verge of despair by this sudden separation. To my lacerated heart he sought to apply the sweet balm of soothing words and promises. It was a tearful, agonizing moment, with the only consoling ray in the wavering darkness of that hour—hope for an early and permanent reunion.

Blind mortals that we were! In his over-anxiety for my welfare and a desire to keep in direct communion with me, he had, at the urgent request of my father, consented to leave Ben Beor behind. I submitted to his protection. Enchanted by his profound learning and wonderful eloquence, King Pharaoh had become so infatuated with the aged hypocrite as to overwhelm him with honors, bestowing upon him the noble title "The Wise Man of the East," making him the associate of Jethro, the high-priest of Midian, and Job, the sage from the land of Uz. These three now constituted the chief counselors of the land. It had been given out by the intriguing, wily schemer, that on account of the long absence of Balack from his realms, a violent revolution had broken out in the kingdom of Moab, which required the immediate attention of the young prince.

As a compensation for retaining Balaam, King Pharaoh furnished his princely visitor with a large retinue of valiant charioteers and servants, concluding on his departure an alliance and treaty of peace and eternal friendship.

After the idol of my heart had left, the mounting billows of my life sank to their old level, as the tides of despairing sorrow subsided. Time, the great harvester, went his tireless way. The sheaves of days, weeks and months were bound up

and laid away in the eternal granary. A year rolled round, but still no word of tenderness from my absent lover winged its way to my waiting soul.

Section IV.—“The Wise Man of the East.”

At my age, the buoyancy of youth, with the fervor and zeal attending the various occupations into which I plunged with greater assiduity than ever, helped me to bear with patience and fortitude my heart-hunger, and pass the time trying to forget my troubles. In this I was greatly comforted by little Moses, my cherished water-waif, who had grown in strength and beauty. Words of childish wisdom fell like pearls from his lips, and even my kingly father with unwonted tenderness bent low his ear when the rosy mouth of the toddler parted. Once when the court was robed in its richest for the annual assembling of “The Three Wise Men,” it happened that little Moses found access to the hall where the royal council was in progress, and with the innocent freedom of a privileged favorite climbed on the knees of the king, who petted and caressed him. Rising upon his tiny feet, he laughingly kissed the sovereign and playfully snatched the crown from the head of the king. Cooing with childish glee, he pressed the glittering circle upon his own ebony curls. Great was the dismay at this babyish prank, and mutterings deep and loud rolled through the assembly. This appropriation of the crown was construed by Balaam, the First Wise Man, as a prophetic omen of coming treason by the offspring of the enslaved Hebrews. Balaam did not hesitate to assert that in course of years this infant would sting the bosom which had warmed him, and attempt to dispossess the

Pharaohs of their throne. As a remedy for this possible future emergency he advised that the boy should be put to death; but before any irrevocable step was taken he requested that I be summoned to the council and allowed a hearing. This was accordingly done. Robed as befitted the imperial daughter, having been informed of what had happened, I stepped into the chamber of their deliberations. Soon I found myself pleading with all the passionate fervor of a woman's nature in behalf of the dear innocent. I was listened to with profound attention, especially by Balaam, who seemed to transfix me with his flashing eyes, unremittingly riveted upon my person. Yet my pleading seemed in vain.

"Give him a test!" cried Balaam. "Place before him two of the holy vessels of Apis. Fill one with glittering gold, the other with live coals. If he snatch at the fire he is but as other children, frolicsome, inquisitive and guileless. If he grasp the gold, construe it as you must!" The vessels were brought and placed before the child, who was held in the arms of Balaam. With a little cry of surprised pleasure the babe plunged his dimpled hands into the glowing coals and carried them to his mouth. With his first wild shriek of pain I snatched him to my heart. His tongue, lips and fingers had been badly blistered. The test being made, Ben Beor smilingly counseled that the previous sentence be revoked. So badly burned was the boy's mouth that ever afterwards he was heavy of speech.

Then in my trembling arms I carried him back to my chambers, calling in the best healers of the realm, and having him not only nursed back to health, but also so guarded and watched that no similar accidents might befall him. I meanwhile

provided for the ideal education of the child. So surely did I contrive my plans for this that they could not fail, no matter what future mishaps should come to his foster-mother. It was my highest ambition to have him brought up as a statesman, a profound lawgiver, a student in the intricate lore and mysteries of Egyptian priestcraft, inclusive of all the wisdom, knowledge, traditions and religion of his Hebrew people, the renown of which had often reached my ears. Especially was I infatuated with their religious faith, which substituted for an endless number of gods and goddesses in creatures often repulsive and obnoxious, the worship of One sole Deity, unseen and unknowable, almighty, omniscient and all-merciful. What a sublime contrast to our adoration of cow, crocodile, ichneumon, and the thousand other things declared sacred by our priests!

In order to accomplish my scheme I summoned some of the foremost of our "magi" and "chardumim," and after consulting with Amram, the father of my beloved Moses, had several learned Israelites, renowned for their knowledge and piety, constituted a commission to take charge of the future physical and mental development of my adopted son. Placing at their disposal a large share of my individual fortune, inherited from my revered mother, I bound them by the most sacred oaths to be true, faithful and loyal to their duties, and then surrendered to them, with tears and endless kisses, the now five-year-old Moses.

Well it was that I had made these timely provisions; for, alas! I was soon to be involved in dire and unforeseen distress. Balaam, by having been the means of saving my protege, fancying now to have changed thereby my indifference towards him, pursued me with passionate protestations of love

and amatory addresses, at the same time threatening that if I refused to listen to the promptings of his burning heart he would reveal to the king my clandestine engagement to a foreigner, an unpardonable crime in the eyes of all Egyptians. Notwithstanding the awful prospect of being consigned to a living tomb as a priestess in one of the temples, I answered his passion with indifference and his ever-increasing advances with lofty scorn. But his stubborn and wily nature disdained the indignity of repulse. One night, with the ignoble assistance of traitorous servants, he with dexterous cunning abducted me in such a manner that no traces or trailing suspicions of his villainous action were left behind.

With one clamorous voice did the nation bewail its lost princess, and no effort was spared to discover what had become of her. No one was more assiduous in loud mourning and in extension of the most lavish sympathy, even to shedding of copious tears with the inconsolable king, than my unscrupulous kidnapper. In alliance with some well-paid priests, he concocted and spread the report that I had been wooed and won by a god who had found me fair among the daughters of men. By his artful manipulations he shortly presented the peremptory order of immediate recall by his sovereign. Greatly regretted and highly honored by splendid gifts, he was permitted to depart.

Section V.—In Captivity.

After days and nights of constant travel, made comfortable to me by every possible device, and during which I received all the deference due to a princess from the well-chosen attendants, our caravan arrived at last in the mountain-fastnesses of

Moab. Here, in apartments scarcely less magnificent than my own at home, I was kept in gilded confinement. Soon Balaam arrived, and now began a constant persecution from him who knew me to be entirely in his power. Persuasion and threats were incessantly employed to wrench from me consent to become his wife. Nay! once, when inflamed by anger and lust he dared the attempt of violently taking hold of my person, I snatched a pearl-handled dagger from his belt, and swore that I would bury it either in my heart or his own if he did not instantly unhand me. From the glistening of my eyes and the convulsive strength with which he saw me bracing myself for the fatal blow, he knew that I would be true to my word. Never again was I subjected by him to a like indignity.

My days and nights were passed in tearful lamentations. But what had become of my lost lover? On reaching his kingdom he found indeed truth in the report of his cunning confidential adviser. The people had revolted against the tyrannical rule of his father, deposed him and proclaimed the son, if he would return at once, successor to the throne. Immediately on his arrival he was borne in triumph to the palace, and amidst great rejoicing and popular jubilees crowned and installed as sovereign of the realm. Under his wise, yet strong rule the provinces soon quieted down, the empire flourished, and everything seemed prosperous. Balaam, who resided a considerable distance from the capital, was appointed chief minister and royal adviser, and I, though kept in strict seclusion, often heard from my attendants, who soon learned to love and pity me, exalted accounts of the glory and renown of the young king of this realm. The slaves of my immediate service were

told that their charge was a mad prisoner who labored under the hallucination that she was a stolen princess. A long and weary time passed. I might have grown reconciled to my cruel fate but for the ever-repeated visits and never-ceasing, repulsive and persistent professions of love by my unyielding captor. After a while the new ruler of Moab with his retinue of courtiers came often to visit Balaam, the favorite of the realm. On one of these occasions the young king in passing through the halls of the castle casually came near my apartments. I heard one of my servants—no doubt in compassion of my sad fate—remark to him: "Here we keep a beautiful lady detained because of her dethroned reason." Actuated unquestionably by curiosity, the royal visitor commanded the portals to be opened. The key forthwith turned in the lock. Mechanically I rose from my seat and lifted my eyes. I recognized him, and with a cry that re-echoed in the marble walls of my prison I fell senseless to the floor. He too knew me again. Kneeling before my prostrate form, his efforts to restore me to consciousness were at length successful. This then was Balack, my adored lover! The great, the true, the brave and all-powerful king! And I was and remained the choice of his fervent, burning affection. We were indeed supremely happy!

And Balaam? Tangled so unexpectedly in a web of fearful guilt from which there was no escape, he confessed all, and throwing himself on his knees, he appealed for mercy to his outraged and deeply-injured sovereign. I, yes I, reminded his Majesty that it was the province of the mighty to show forbearance, despite the fearful crime of abduction and detention, and succeeded, by the plenitude of his love for me, in softening his anger and

obtaining pardon for the offender. The apparently crushed and repentant criminal cried out, as if in despair, that his sin sprang from the uncontrollable excess of an unfortunate but sincere passion. Arrangements were soon perfected for our immediate departure.

When left for a moment alone, Balaam found the opportunity to have access to my presence and exclaim: "Revenge on thee and thine! Revenge on whatever thou lovest and cherishest! Deep, exquisite, unfathomable revenge of a foiled lover and a disgraced man!" I derisively smiled, and commanded him to leave or I would instantly inform his Majesty of this new outrage. And he left, but with such fierce and terrible gesticulation as made me tremble. I did not see him again till after many years, when, as the sequel will show, I was to feel his malignant vengeance.

Everything being ready, we started on our return to the imperial residence. On the road I learned from my betrothed that immediately when he arrived home, even amidst the momentous affairs of state, he had despatched trusted messengers to the Egyptian court. These returning, reported that I had mysteriously gone to the gods, which means in Oriental language to have paid the debt of nature by death; that my aged father followed me to the tomb, grief-stricken and despairing; and that the whole land was in a state of turmoil and revolt, caused by the unbearable tyranny of the new king, Rameses, my own brother. An invasion of foreign tribes had followed, and that then occurred the successful liberation and flight from Egypt of the Hebrew slaves, under the leadership of a most remarkable and wonderful hero.

Upon our arrival at the capital, the necessary preparations completed, amidst the greatest mag-

nificence and pompous ceremonies, in presence of the people from near and far, our nuptial ceremonies were performed and two loving hearts were joined.

Years passed in the utmost marital felicity. But as there is no perfect happiness vouchsafed in the sub-lunar world, ours was marred by the absence of children in our household. We were growing old—silvery threads appeared in my glossy hair—yet never a word of complaint or murmuring passed the lips of my ever-faithful husband, though I could at times detect in him the sad consciousness that there was no heir to his throne. An Eastern woman only can measure the blighting misfortune of being barren, children being considered the highest blessing of domestic life.

One day messengers mounted upon swift steeds, so celebrated among the Bedouin tribes, brought the surprising and unexpected news that an endless host of the fugitive Hebrews in their invincible might were successfully and miraculously crossing the uninhabitable "Sahara Petreaë." They had reached the borders of Moab. A hasty council consisting of the bravest and most skillful and sturdy Ishmaelite chiefs was summoned. They quickly assembled. After due deliberation it was agreed that our warriors were no match for the well-trained Israelitish hosts, unless some supernatural intervention could be called to our aid to help us fight the invaders. Then the king and the magnates of the realm bethought themselves of Balaam. It was resolved that it became necessary, before venturing upon a life-and-death combat with the Hebrews, to invoke him to come and hurl against this dreadful host, Heaven's most awful curses. An embassy of some of the foremost chiefs, loaded with costly presents, was despatched

to him with the royal invitation to appear forthwith and pronounce the potent maledictions.

Section VI.—The Blessing and the Curse.

The old schemer in his mountain-retreat had long abided his chance. Under some sanctimonious pretense he at first utterly refused the king's behest. A second and more distinguished party, with still more precious and rich gifts, was sent to him. Reserving for himself the right "whether to bless or to curse," he at last consented to come, and on his arrival at the palace was received with more than princely distinction. While the grand preparation of bringing oblations and sacrifices to our god, "Baal-Peor," was under way, it happened that he casually met me for an instant alone. "I shall not curse, but bless thy Moses!" he ejaculated, with the blandest and most insinuating voice and mien, but with such a leer that it made me involuntarily shudder. "Moses—my Moses!"—how the name tugged at my heart and brought back a flood of the most tender and affectionate recollections! So my long secretly-cherished forebodings at last were confirmed. It was my foster-son, my water-waif, who had grown up to accomplish the liberty of his people, and who now was leading them past our borders, to that promised land of which I had heard so much in my maidenhood, as contained in the Israelitish traditions.

Sad decree of fate! Here was my own worshipped husband now in deadly array against the hero of my youth and his nation. I dared not even breathe a word in their favor, the people of my adopted country hating them so fiercely. And yet, how I hungered and longed to speed to him, to see the splendidly matured manhood, to press

him if only once again to my breast and, like a tender mother, kiss him on his godlike brow! I resolved at last to wait patiently and see whether I could not intercede for him favorably with my august husband. Alas! the sore turn affairs shortly took!

Balaam, true to his secret words, could not by any means at command of Moab be induced to curse Israel. On the contrary, at seven altars erected by his request he pronounced the most voluble and prophetic benedictions over the widespread tents of Jacob, now erected at the foot of our hills, in words as eloquent as ever fell from the lips of heaven-inspired poet. They have been preserved among the books of your sacred writings. No one, the king and myself included, could understand then the inexplicable policy of the old, immovable seer. Too soon, however, his terribly wicked designs were made manifest. When the hypocritical jest was over a secret conclave met, during which my husband and his companions deemed themselves alone and unobserved. I had found means to see and hear all that passed. How shall I now find words to relate the harrowing experience!

After hurling the most bitter and blasphemous scorn upon their reliance to be shielded and protected by the shadow of empty words, either curse or blessing, Balaam proceeded to show in clear-cut phrases what he had learned of the object and aim of Moses, his plans and mission. With an irresistible logic he demonstrated to his eager hearers that the code of laws which the Hebrew leader, like one inspired from heaven, had devised for the government and life of his people, would ultimately lead to universal freedom and happiness of the individual man, as well as to their multiples, the

nations of this world. But while by this gigantic civilizing process the lower masses were raised until they reached such guerdon, the privileged castes and classes would be utterly merged into the common lot. This should not be! Master and slaves! is the watchword by which the thrones and altars sustain and perpetuate their superiority over the herd of humanity. Henceforth it is Balaam against Moses! War eternal unto death between "Baal-Peor" and "Jehovah!" "The problem is solved," he cried, "by employing in the service of the high, ruling classes the passionate instincts which govern the lower man, and forthwith we will try their efficacy in this our struggle with those Israelites. Listen then to what are my plans and purposes: These Hebrews are stronger and by far more numerous than we; therefore we must weaken and decimate them. There is but one way at present to achieve this. By their hot oriental nature they are blindly susceptible to the blandishments and wiles of the fair sex. Command therefore, O king, forthwith that all our depraved and loose women approach their neighborhood; that they use their charms and smiles to ensnare them in their meshes; but let them be instructed never to grant favor or kindness to their victims except they first seduce them to bend their knees and worship our idol Baal-Peor with all the rites and ceremonies which that service implies!" Such a hilarious, approving uproar this cunning proposition evoked among his amazed hearers, that for some time the deafening shouts prevented the king expressing his full assent to the measure, declaring that with the coming morning his edicts should go forth to set the plan into execution.

When the royal declaration had restored quiet, Balaam continued: "But even the fullest success

of this scheme will give to the old condition of things temporary relief only. Were we able to kill every one of these accursed Semites, yet the spirit, this giant mind of their leader has evoked, is abroad, and the truths which he has taught cannot be crushed. Unless an antidote be found, farewell to privileged castes, farewell to monarchs, princes and nobility, and farewell to priesthood! Thanks to the gods! I have found this also. Let my servants bring forth the filled urns of 'the Spirits of Life,' which I have brought with me to exhibit the powers of the same before you. Until they come [two slaves had started to do his bidding] let me say that I am experimenting with another force to aid us, by which, whenever I shall complete it for use, the masses which we now fear will overpower us by numbers, if it comes to a conflict, we then will be able to destroy whole hosts of them as if by unseen hands. Thus far the explosive force to be discovered by the combination of chemicals is not attained, or I would have shattered the armies of our invaders to atoms; yet I am sanguine that by continued trials I shall ultimately succeed."

Section VII.—The Intoxicating Cup.

Here the servants returned, bearing each upon his shoulders two well-sealed urns, and placed these before their master. Golden cups were brought forth and filled with the sparkling fluid. Its insidious strength had been made palatable by some aromatic flavor. Goblet after goblet was emptied by every one of the company, and like a magic potion it revealed its intoxicating influence upon the unsatiated imbibers. As they grew wildly excited, Balaam once more rose to his feet and

addressed the king: "My sire," he exclaimed, "all our work will be vain and fruitless unless I have thy immediate co-operation. It is a hard sacrifice which I must ask, but if thou art not willing to make it we may as well at once surrender to our enemies. I have positive knowledge that the queen is in greatest sympathy with the Hebrews. It was she who rescued their Moses, when an infant, from death in the waters; it was through her influence that he was initiated into the lore and mysteries of the priests; and it will be she who next betrays every movement we shall make. Thou either wilt be privy to their treason, or place her in such seclusion and under such surveillance as to prevent her sending aid to the enemy."

At this the king grew violent; his eyes glared like those of a madman; his hands clutched at the empty air, and with a voice thick and broken with fearful oaths and imprecations he swore that no wife of his should thus betray him and Moab; that the queen be placed at sunrise in the tower of the castle, and there remain under guard, day and night, until all danger should be over.

Never before had I seen my husband so fierce, so wildly aroused, so brutally angered, so full of passion and excitement. I felt sick at heart; all grew dark before my eyes—I fainted and fell to the floor. What happened then I do not know. When I awoke to consciousness I found myself in a dungeon-like room, the existence of which I never before had known. I heard the heavy tread of the guardsman, pacing up and down before the door. In spite of my tears, my screams, my utmost despair, I was kept here for several days without being permitted to see a living person. Food and water were given me through an orifice which opened and shut as if by magic. Light, dim and gloomy,

fell from the high ceiling above. All needed comforts were amply provided. But, oh! how the time dragged; how lonely, how miserably the eternity of hours passed; what fearful thoughts crowded upon my mind; how often did I clutch at the dagger secreted in my bosom, intending with a blow to end my despair and existence. Yet at the decisive moment courage failed me. Hope against hope renewed in me the instinctive desire for life. At last after several days—I do not know how many, for I had not the power to keep track of time—the door opened. It was towards evening. Then entered Balaam, leading in Balack. O heaven! what a change the short period had wrought upon my hapless husband! Once so beautiful, haughty, brave, proud and manly—I saw at a glance that he was not even the shadow of himself. Reeling and idiotic, he staggered to my couch and fell down upon it like an inanimate log. I threw myself on my knees before him; I kissed and carressed him, called him loudly by every endearing expression of which he used to be so fond; I took his hands, wet them with my tears, and pressed them to my heart. Alas! alas! alas!—he knew me not—he recognized me no longer. As I turned my face, Balaam with folded arms and the most fiendish look stood before me. His words came slowly and deliberately, every one cutting into my agonized soul. Then he said: “Behold my work! Behold the dire vengeance of a despised lover! The drink which I have brewed in my seething caldron has done its dire and appointed work, as it shall do it henceforth forever. Veiled at the beginning of its use with the sweetness of a mild and undivined influence over heart and brain, as the appetite grows it punishes the abuse gradually but unfailingly with the torments

of hell. Look yonder, lady, how it changes the calm and equable intelligence into swinish depravity, accompanied by boiling fever-dreams, causing the drunkard's frenzy and madness, terminating ultimately in the most horrible of all catastrophes—convulsive death. Thanks to my genius, these ravages, now started, will go on through the years of eternity! Thanks to my thirst to be revenged on fickle woman, the whole sex shall forever be punished most sorely for the torments of thwarted affection inflicted upon me by a woman."

At this moment the king awoke from his death-like stupor. With one desperate effort he sprang to his feet. In an instant he had hold of Balaam with a wild beast's fury. All his motions were spasmodic; his disheveled hair rose on end; his eyes protruded far out of their sockets. He held his adversary tightly clutched by the throat and would certainly have strangled him, when all of a sudden the combat ceased. The arms fell limp to his side. He staggered back; fell to the floor lifeless, dead—dead—a corpse!

The awful struggle ended, we both stood over the inanimate form, I in utter consternation and bewilderment, he in the glee of a ghoul feasting on the ravages of murder. Presently he spoke: "Now all obstacles are conquered. Now thou shalt be mine, willing or not! Thou art my love, my wife! Here I will clasp thee to my breast!" As he made ready to spring towards me, I drew the dagger hidden in my bosom. It glistened in my hand. He hesitated for a moment, then stepped back. I bent forward toward him. How I may have looked in that instant I cannot tell, but I saw him shudder. Then I launched a most fearful curse on his head. The awful words came to me like the rush of a cataract. I well remember the last:

“ Be accursed by men and women,
By little children’s cry!
Accursed by widows and orphans,
Accursed forever and aye ! ”

How he winced and cringed as I now stood over him! Then, as if to strengthen myself for the fatal deed, leaning backwards, I plunged the steel with one decisive blow into my own heart, and instantly a gush of blood streamed right into his blanched face. Falling to the ground, I lay dying beside my husband. Before I expired, however, I saw with my already failing eyes the door opening. I heard the maddening cry: “ The foe, the foe! Fly before the Hebrews! Fly, fly, fly ! ” As I directed a last glance towards the entrance, even with my ebbing life, behold! there stood he—Moses! I knew him—my own, my Moses! Around his head a sheen of glory, a flood of light. One last, lingering look I cast upon the idol of my youth. Then all grew dark, all was over.

Section VIII.—After Death.—Spirit Life.

Thus ended my earthly career. My spirit-life is quickly told. Aside from the common frailties of human nature, prone to sin and error, I had thrown my mortal life into the face of Him who gave it; and although there were great and palliating excuses, stern justice demanded purification and atonement. It commenced with an incomputable period of a blank, from which I, like one dazed, gradually and by slow advancement returned to the consciousness of personal self. Let me pass a veil over the struggles of a soul yearning and rising upwards, constantly and zealously climbing by most minute progress towards the eternal height of perfection. If sin committed under the

irresistible force of fate caused me the terror-inspiring, trembling experience, O merciful Heaven! what must it be to the common suicide, who, without even a justification like mine, perhaps in a moment of despondency, seeks exit from momentary troubles and rushes in revolt toward the eternal doom of despair? Was it not part of my chastisement to view constantly beneath me abyss beneath abyss, seeing there the withering, writhing forms, hearing the piercing, despondent cries of remorse and penance? At last these grew fainter and fainter, to my supreme relief, as I felt myself borne upward higher and higher, till finally they ceased altogether.

At a certain stage of my advance from darkness toward light I became conscious of other shadow-forms, companions struggling alongside of me to regain their lost goal. The perception of one especially was at first like a far, far-off strain of harmony—a vibration of attractive potency. What intense gratitude then concentrated in all my being at the thought that I was no longer alone in efforts to rise upwards; that perhaps a kindred soul shared sympathetically the regaining process nearing our lost ideal! “O God! O Father of mercy! Might it be possible—could it be vouchsafed to my poor quivering spirit!—this to be him!—my earth-love!—twined together in our hearts below, now to be destined here above as it were hand in hand, once again to be united and to work out together soon, soon, soon, that part of our celestial trial which ultimately shall bring us before the mercy-seat of the all-loving One, restored and re-accepted by His infinite grace!” This feeling, this depthless yearning, grew intenser and, as it grew, my neighbor-soul, no doubt attracted strongly by a corresponding sympathy, came

nearer and nearer and its presence clearer to my jubilant perception. Ages must have passed in closing up the distance of this mutual approach. Floating amidst the immeasurable spheres of an endless horizon, like a sailor who descries land after being driven by adverse storms on his protracted voyage, there appeared now in the far distance an ever-growing and increasing luminous globe, whence I and, as I was surely cognizant, my companions drifted with great velocity. Soon I recognized the soft blue, pale light to be the adored "Levanah," the beautiful Moon I had so often gazed at in wonderment and delight during the earth's starry nights of my mundane existence.

Gradually a change in my immediate surroundings, which began almost imperceptibly, took place. From the misty nothingness in which I floated thus far I had entered the mild, soothing, lacteal atmosphere of the new heavenly orb to which I now approached. Closer I came to it and ever closer, until at last my ethereal being landed amidst an immense multitude of shadow-creatures, who had assembled as it seemed for my reception. But I came not alone! With me in the same instant my mysterious fellow-spirit was there also. We recognized each other simultaneously—Balack and Merris—once again reunited!—Exulting joy, heavenly exaltation—rescued, saved, redeemed! It was nothing like the carnal, earthly bliss with which lover meets the beloved, but the rapturous, celestial emotion, no doubt thrilling through Seraph and Cherub when kneeling at the throne of the Eternal, chanting their "Glorias" and "Hallelujahs." Entwined in each other's spiritual essence, presently a voice, as if coming from Above, proclaimed: "Work out here your final salvation by goodness, holy unselfishness, love and

truth!" Happiness of happiness! we were parted no more, but allowed in the tasks assigned us here to labor contentedly and joyfully, from the lowliest and most modest station, bravely, untired; cheerfully, in our purified soul-companionship, through all the weary stages of our probation and re-elevation, until at last we have reached the highest pinnacle as "Melech" and "Malkah," patiently and prayerfully devout, awaiting the blessed hour of our further translation to the sanctified realms, of which we as yet are not permitted to know or may not realize.

This ends my evidence and story. But now when near the fulfilment of our fondest and sweetest hopes, unexpected and unprecedented troubles and commotions, caused by the appearance here of my sub-lunar tormentor Balaam ben Beor, have arisen and threaten new and immeasurable calamities, sorrows and misfortunes. In this great emergency, next to our unbounded trust and confidence in our great heavenly Father, we throw ourselves upon thy protecting care and guidance, O great messianic ambassador! Help us, heal us, save us! So be it the will of our God, our Rock and Redeemer!

INTAGLIO THE FIFTH.

THE PRISONER'S EVIDENCE.

When the "Malkah" had finished her beautiful and pathetic story, we adjourned the meeting to the heights where had been erected the observatory. The way thither led first through a long row of palisades, at the end of which it continued through grand avenues of towering trees, loaded

with a rich golden harvest of most luscious-looking fruit. The Prophet, the Melech, and Malkah led the way. The crowd followed. Upon reaching the plateau we found everything arranged for our reception. At the foot of the scaffolding on which the gigantic eye-tube rested was erected a platform for the accommodation of the august persons who were to continue the hearing of the testimony. As far as the eye could reach the space was crowded with the shadow-people, assembled by the proclamation of the king. Soon everything was in readiness. A host of military men appeared with the prisoner of state. He was bound and shackled. They dragged him to this elevated point on the mountains of the Moon. As he now stood before us he began to speak :

“Forced hither before thee, all-potent stranger, by the shadow-soldiery, serving under command of the despised Melech, I am to make confession of the part which I have acted in the present mutinous state on this Moon. Deformed and crippled by long imprisonment, yet could I have defied them all, and with the strength of these arms have put them to rout, were it not that unaccountable restraints have paralyzed my strength. These fools believe that their adamantine chains placed upon my wrists confine me to their will. Look! the spell has left me! I shatter them to atoms and stand free and disenthralled before thee! And yet with the power of a host, the overawing glances of thine eyes leave me powerless as a reed before the wind. Deign then to listen to my tale, but know I ask neither for sympathy, pity nor forgiveness. In two worlds, defiant, malignant, and destructive have I raged. Now I feel tired and worn out even amidst the luxurious revel of my latest achievements. When thou hast heard me to

the end, grant me the only boon which I yet crave—entire and final annihilation. While living in the terrestrial world below I was one of the great magi, who by indomitable will, exhaustless patience and never-ceasing thirst for knowledge attained to the mysteries of profoundest lore, and fathomed the depths of the occult sciences to such degree that I could understand the secrets hidden from most other minds. I was able to manipulate the secret laws of mechanics and chemistry. Alas! instead of employing the genius of my soul in the service and for the benefit of my kind, I used it exclusively for my personal aggrandizement; and while I might have become the blessed benefactor of men, and God's instrument for the advancement of everything true, noble and good, I chose to pervert my talents for the benefit of accursed and hateful promulgators of priest-craft and tyranny, becoming the vile means for debasing and debauching suffering humanity. Nor did I escape the certain law of cause and effect.

Instead of realizing my schemes and dreams for sway and rule, I reaped the malignity and hatred of those who suffered by the pernicious results of my labors, and the vilest ingratitude of all for whose benefit I delved and toiled in realms where but few of the selected chosen had been able to enter. They simply used me as their tool, to be thrown aside and cast away as soon as their purposes were attained. Too late I realized the value of favors from the great. Disenchanted and disappointed, yet might my career have been different but for the blighting discovery that one who owed to me the preservation of his throne, sceptre and crown had robbed and despoiled me of that one irretrievable treasure, an idolized and madly-worshipped woman. While ceaselessly engaged in my laboratory and

among my books and manuscripts, over problems by which successfully to hold in check his ever-rebellious subjects, he took from me the only being to whom my soul was wedded and who I fancied should become my wife. True, she objected to this even when absolutely in my power. It was necessary, therefore, unscrupulously to kidnap her from parent and friends.

This is not an unusual procedure in our Oriental fashion, when one wishes to possess himself of some obstinate maiden. Yet when she at last to all appearances received my wooing complacently, she took the first occasion to betray me—I never learned how. She met my pretended friend and patron. They had previously been acquainted and indulged in some foolish flirtations. He carried her away and actually married her. I swore vengeance!—vengeance to the whole race of mortals! And faithfully, too faithfully have I kept my oath. Goaded on by rage and desperation, I set free a demon in that nether world which, under guise of pleasure and exhilaration, has proved, and forever will prove, the veriest instrument of perdition—"Intoxicating Drink"! The evil results of my malign calculations exceeded my most sanguine expectation. Satan incarnate must have lent me the inspiration for the accomplishment of this fell work. I have had the satisfaction of seeing its first effects. My false friend, on whom I maliciously practised to ascertain its fatal results, went mad. Meanwhile it besotted no less his whole realm. Onward and irresistible it rolls now through all climes and zones, overwhelming all conditions and spheres, high and low, poor and rich, the ignorant and wise, the young and old. Such is the fearful, horrible revenge of one spurned and betrayed in love! Though I have quaffed the exquisite sweetness of my vengeance to

the very dregs, yet retribution, keen, sharp and quick, with hollow-eyed torments, has followed in the wake of my footsteps. As if to verify an old adage, "Wherewith one sinneth, therewith shall he be punished," I myself became the victim of my lately invented beverage. My mortal career ended with that frightful and stupendous finale reserved for all drunkards—the dread disease, a species of terrible delirium. Spare me the recital of the shuddering torments which awaited me after I had shuffled off the mortal coil. Suffice it to say that for ages which seemed like eternities, amidst the most excruciating remorse, consuming horrors and the pangs of true repentance, at last there was vouchsafed to me, as I fervently hoped, a probationary respite, by being permitted to enter on this shadow-world. Alas and alas! the torments which I hitherto had endured were trifles compared to the trials that awaited me. Scarcely had I entered here—what must I behold! Yonder villain who had betrayed me; this woman who had spurned my love—here they are in the enjoyment of perfect conjugal bliss; honored, loved and distinguished, as falls but to the envied share of even the most fortunate; governing and ruling the whole realm of this Moon as the "Melech" and "Malkah." Then I learned by experience that there is something more bitter than death: something more terrible than the sufferings of the infernal regions—Jealousy and Hatred! At once anew awoke my old passion. No matter what thereafter be my fate, no care what troubles should linger for me in the future, once more I panted fiercely for revenge—to deal out destruction and calamity to my rival and his doting bride. I have accomplished it. Verily I have succeeded! All here is now ferment, confusion and anarchy. How I revel in

the coming chaos! I see it all, as it were, already. My work is done, and now I am content. I have lost all sense of fear or terror. Come what may, I am prepared. There is but one wish left me, one craving yet to be achieved. Grant it if thou hast power; deny it if thou seest fit—annihilation—utter, absolute, final, moral and physical dissolution. But do thou thy worst, I defy thee and our Maker!”

INTAGLIO THE SIXTH.

THE RECORD OF THE CHIEF SCRIBE.

Appalled and astounded did we stand, all who were present at the awful, blasphemous recital of our state prisoner. Consternation was visible on every face, depicting a unanimous feeling. The question no doubt prevailed in many breasts: “What if there is no power to neutralize the revolting viciousness of this malignant monster?” There he stood, defiant and bold, quivering and panting from the excitement and the extraordinary exertion. The holy prophet alone appeared calm and wonderfully composed. Stern and resolute as his features remained, yet there was something sublimely sad and benignant in his eyes. With a sway of the hand he motioned me to his side, and broke the oppressive silence by the command: “Write! Write down the judgment of this wretched being. I shall now dictate to thee his sentence:

“There is no annihilation in the code of the Creator! Even a fiend like this criminal cannot be blotted from the record of final mercy. But extraordinary baseness requires special remedies. Listen, then, to thy doom, unalterable and irrevocable:

“Before thou, Ben-Beor, wilt be permitted to start anew on thy spiritual purification in the depths and despair of Sheol; and before thou mayst thereafter recommence probation for atonement and reconciliation with the All-Merciful:

“Back to earth thou hereby art consigned. There thou must wander in thy human body from generation to generation, without rest or quiet. Driven by an irresistible impulse, from place to place, from zone to zone, there, thou rebel, fiend and seducer, shalt witness the baneful results of thy accursed work. Rivers of blood and streams of tears continually flowing in every quarter of the globe, shall remind thee of thy wickedness and crimes. Every felon of note shall become thy special agent! The ignorant, brutal and debased shall at all times be thy followers! But thy veriest successes, evil though these be, shall yet be the certain overthrow of sin. For every step of retrogression which thou shalt behold must witness still the glorious, steady march of peace, progress, tolerance and liberty. And to the sworn foes of thy implacable wrath, the chosen people of Israel, though they will undergo martyrdom by the hands of blind hatred, yet to them is assigned the eternal mission to bring about exalted salvation, the kingdom of God. Thy worst punishment shall come by the power through which other men find happiness in their mortal lives: Forever the rapturous beauty of Merris, thy first love, reproduced in some female form, during the ages to come, shall prove thy living torment. Creep on, miserable wretch, until the measure of retribution for thy iniquity shall be full! The time at last will come when thou shalt stray to a country as yet unknown and undiscovered. In the morning-light of universal Freedom and religious Tolerance will there arise a new

nation. Then the malediction that rests upon thee shall be changed into blessing. Then at last shall the hour strike when in the solitude of cave-life—‘a Recluse in the wild Mountains’—thou shalt once more be permitted by God’s never-ending mercy, to die!

“And as a token and sign that this, my judgment, is approved and accepted on High, I again, as once when standing on Mount Carmel in presence of the Baal prophets, invoke the Lord to send fire from Heaven, that these people may know that Thou, Lord, art God.”

Barely had the words left the upturned face when the whole firmament was lit up amazingly with sheets of fire, and bolts of lightning flew hither and thither. Amidst the terrible commotion of nature, suddenly the prophet stretched forth his hands, grasping with unexpected force the struggling, cringing culprit, lifted him high in the air, and hurled him whirling into space, where he disappeared with the most terrible screams, that grew fainter and fainter as he was lost gradually to sight.

Every one of us fell on our knees, with one accord exclaiming: “The Lord alone is the true God! The Lord alone is the true God!”

INTAGLIO THE SEVENTH.

HARROWING SIGHTS ON EARTH.

Agreeably to the instructions of my superiors, I, the Second Scribe, have caused the placing at the disposal of our divine Messenger the large and powerful eye-tube. As soon as it was set in proper position by the operators he immediately proceeded to make use thereof, and I was com-

manded to record faithfully his observations. I watched him with great attention. After a short interval his eyes became accustomed to look through the tube. I noticed with deep sympathy the extremely painful changes which took place on his countenance. Such expressions of dismay and horror were depicted on his strongly-marked Oriental features as to make me apprehensive that he would fall fainting at any moment. Several times he attempted to speak; the power failed him and nothing issued from his convulsed lips but broken ejaculations of grief, while tears rolled in long streams over his swarthy face. His hands, and in fact his whole body, were in a tremor, and we could see that it took all his brave strength to remain upright and maintain his position. After repeated futile efforts, he at length essayed, in tones most like a broken whisper, to command, "Write!" Then again a distressingly long pause ensued, when at last he dictated as follows:

"O bitter, woful hour! Why was I not spared this excruciating sight that harrows my soul and will break my tormented heart? My loved city of Judah, revered temple of the Lord, invaded by the cruel foreign enemy! Nebuchadnezzar, with his hosts of Babylonian cohorts, has come for their destruction. Through the streets of doomed Jerusalem rave her own sons with sword in hand, in despair defending their refuge places. The marble pavements flow with the blood and tears of her children; hunger stalks through her avenues with hollow, glaring eyes. Yonder I see a woman—she kills her child, butchers her own offspring; there—there she roasts the tender corpse at the hearth of her own house! Dreadful, too dreadful! she devours with starving greed the fruit of her maternity. The Hebrew soldiers now passing by, look-

ing through the open door, stand back aghast. An aged priest totters forth. He can go no further. Exhausted by want, he rests himself on the threshold, and, shocked at the frightful view before him, he sinks to the ground, gasps and dies. Fighting and bloodshed are everywhere. The invader thunders with terrible siege-armaments against the walls of the city. Still the brave defenders hold out courageously to the last. The famishing troops, almost too weak to stand up, how yet they fight for their loved, revered Temple! Lo, over yonder a breach is effected near one of the pillars of the East. A tower falls. One of the heathen commanders, the bold Nebusaradan, springs upon the ramparts; his soldiers follow and press close after him. They overwhelm the city and enter the temple. The priests of the Lord are slain, the nobles of the land loaded with chains. Horror and consternation stalk madly through the streets. King Zedekiah, the weak, vacillating monarch of the Hebrews, is a fugitive; he and a few followers have fled for their lives, bent upon reaching the river Jordan. Now his pursuers overtake and blind him; he is a captive. Presently the city is on fire, the holy edifice is in flames. Upon the ruins of the desolated scene cowers the grief-stricken prophet Jeremiah and wails his sad lamentations. His venerable face is turned up to heaven. With quivering voice he bemoans the wrath of the Lord, poured upon his hapless people. Oh, that I might join him in his woe! that I might add the sorrow of my grief-stricken heart to his! Lord! Thy temple destroyed; Thy city in ashes; Thy children dispersed, fleeing or slain! It is too much, too much! Mercy, Father, mercy!"

With these ejaculations the holy prophet fell unconscious to the ground. Awe-struck and terri-

fied, we all stood around him in utter consternation. But his swoon lasted only for a few moments. Presently he springs to his feet and, as if to efface and make us forget his mortal weakness, with thundering voice he cries out: "I hear the maddened foe coming! The frenzied shadow-hosts are upon us! Instantly they will be here! Prepare—prepare! The supreme catastrophe is at hand! The Lord Himself is nigh in judgment!"

INTAGLIO THE EIGHTH.

REVOLUTION.

While the momentous events related by my predecessor, the Second Scribe, were transpiring in the vestibule before the observatory, others of even more ponderous importance took place in the sub-planetary domain, which I, the Third Secretary, was to write down.

At all hours of the long night the shadow-inhabitants had, with even more than usual alertness, exercised their watchful espionage on the terrestrial doings below them. Affairs of extraordinary interest seem to go on there. With the smaller eye-tubes which they had constructed for themselves, by aid of Balaam, they with uninterrupted steadiness make observations in one direction and seemingly upon one point. Suddenly this is changed. A cry of horror issues from the camp. A human figure is seen hurled with giant's force over the moon. With immeasurable velocity the living object, twirling over and over and ejaculating the most fearful and piercing cries, revolves downward through space. Now the amazed spectators, bewildered at the startling nature of this

unexpected revelation, were secretly joined by a body of treacherous guards, who long since were disaffected. This revolutionary crowd speeds along the densely packed avenues and makes known the summary judgment which has been visited by the stranger who so unexpectedly assumed power and authority. The wildest commotion breaks forth among the frenzied hosts, who had thus far looked upon the so terribly chastised monster as their most effectual ally and prospective leader. Soon it becomes known also that their new military adjuncts are in possession of the secret storage place of the lately invented combustibles, and by one accord they are placed as leading chiefs to guide the now passion-intoxicated masses to the ominous stores. Firebrands and torches of all kinds are quickly procured, and the wild hordes, unbridled and unrestrained, like fiends let loose, storm away towards the thus far hidden receptacles, bent upon demolition and destruction. It is at this terrific moment—the sun had just arisen and brought us daylight ere they had time to carry out their diabolical intentions—when the prophet Elijah cried out: “Prepare! prepare! the supreme catastrophe is at hand! The Lord Himself is nigh in judgment!”

Then I am required by him to chronicle upon the last plate, the following final occurrences as they transpire before our eyes:

An immense hand becomes visible, moved by a correspondingly sized arm. It is stretched forth and lights the fuse which leads to the fire-laden magazines. Turning toward the approaching furious mob, with one sweep it hurls them towards the now suddenly opening tremendous craters, from whence the lurid flames reveal the indescribable terrors of the other side of the moon. As if driven by an irresistible impulse, in fearful stampede the

entire host of rebels fly headlong thither and disappear, howling, screeching and screaming.

I see the ignited fuse eating its way slowly towards the underground quartz-hewn chambers of the regal palace. The holy prophet, like a spirit, determined and inspired, places himself at the outermost point of the craters. The fiery chariot in which he came approaches towards us. Melech, Malkah, and all ministers and scribes, are impelled to mount the mysterious vehicle. I remain to the last, still recording.

Already the catastrophe of explosion has commenced. Mountains are hurled upon mountains; crevices beyond sight in huge extent open everywhere; basins of immeasurable magnitude become visible; all the elements seem to have broken loose; shattered and chaotic lies everything; oceans of fire and seas of flame rush forth belching and thundering from every direction. Amidst all this I see the man of God, grown like unto a giant form, stand unmoved and firm. Now I am impelled to move towards my companions. Night is coming on—thick, impenetrable night. We move upwards towards heaven. The prophet commands me to write this last sentence:

“Behold I will send to you the prophet Elijah before the great and awful day of the Lord cometh. And he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers.

“Pen abo w’hikysi es ho-orez cherem.”

פֶּן אֲבוֹא וְהִכִּיתִי אֶת הָאָרֶץ חֶרֶם :

ADDENDUM I.

A foot-note from the Recluse explains here that he remembers these to be the very last words of the Old Testament (Malachi iii. 24), and that he is unable to decipher intelligently the final sentences appending them to his manuscripts, they having, as he expresses it, no doubt reference to the destinies of that mystic being who shows his face and figure nightly when the Levanah is full, and then reveals on her surface the outlines of

THE MAN IN THE MOON.

The most curious part of this quaint recital appears in the fact that the Recluse, during the absorbing task of deciphering the inscriptions on the Intaglios, has entirely forgotten his identity and intimate connection with the record of the aerolite. This, however, will not appear anomalous, when considering the severe strain on the already over-excited mental faculties of so aged a person.

The cataclysm of the destruction of the moon's visible surface and "the story of the man" showing himself nightly on the luminary, as she walks full through the horizon, closes the translation of the Semitic inscriptions.

But a large mass of manuscript is appended, forming the subject of the second roll, the contents of which are of equal interest with the translations. It contains the memoirs of that singular cave-dweller who withdrew from human society to end his life here in the untrodden solitude.

The incidents related must have required sound, sober thought. The story told is of lucid, logical progression. The characters delineated are penned with deep penetration into human nature. The language used, although in its idiomatic and pecu-

liar construction, reveals the foreigner, who has acquired it by study, never tantamount to the ease and fluency of those to the manner born; yet it is terse, nervous, and at times even eloquent, showing the skilled hand of fair experience. Were it not for these cumulated facts the whole might be looked upon as the wild hallucination of a mind disordered by the isolated life and peculiar surroundings of the eccentric author.

Without further comment they are hereby submitted to the candid and unprejudiced perusal of the reader. If they achieve no more than to while away pleasantly a lonesome hour of leisure, they have then attained some object; but they perhaps casually will do more. It is said in some ancient writing, that he who makes two blades of grass grow where before was but one, is a benefactor of our kind. Maybe some thought is awakened, some kindlier feeling aroused, some prejudice dispelled, and the great brotherhood recognized, which entwines all humanity—this great principle so often clouded and obscured by the machinations of those who rule and batten on the ignorance and superstitions of the misguided masses. Therefore this quaint autobiography, entitled in juxtaposition to some other well-known story, *The Wandering Gentile*, must not be withheld from the intelligent world.

The whole plot has reference to an incessant feud, carried on through all the eras of the past, between two fierce opponents, their respective causes and hosts of followers, with ever alternating results. It is the deathly struggle between Moses and kindred Liberators, and Ben Beor, the Anti-Messiah; and incidentally of "Moabite" against "Hebrew." In many instances the poor harassed Jew is brought near to the verge of gasping out, seemingly, his last breath. But at the very lowest stage

of his despair and when near annihilation, again and again, as if by some miraculous power, he rouses himself and renews the combat with re-animated courage, enabling him to patiently suffer, endure and struggle on for existence and fulfilment of a mission.

There is a tradition, not embodied in the pages of the shadow-author, which may have reference to these historical affairs, and throw light upon the origin of a quaint orthodox ceremony yet faithfully practised by conservative Israelites. It resembles in its nature the rallying cry of a soldier who in defeat prepares once again to meet the enemy. Lifting up his eyes to the starry sky whenever the nocturnal sickle of light reappears as new moon on the horizon, the patient martyr of Palestinian origin bends his head in devout prayer to sanctify himself by that glorious phenomenon, filled with fresh hope, trust and returning vigor to carry on the task given, as he solemnly vows, by Him who of yore had made this strange prediction: "Behold, I will send to you the prophet Elijah before the great and awful day of the Lord cometh." Then the one who thus prayeth springs bodily upward as high as his physical strength will permit, and exclaims the words from his old ritual: "As little as I can reach thee, O Levanah, so little may, by aid of Heaven, my enemies be permitted to prevail over me!"

This supplementary story is then presented as a singular reminder of the old legend, the "*Wandering Jew*." No less startling and romantic, but by far more consonant with and responsive to the natural sequence and order in the harmony of events, it forms a fair commentary to the annals of bygone ages.

Respectfully submitted,

THE EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

PART II.

HISTORICAL PHANTASMAGORIA.

BEN-BEOR, THE WANDERING GENTILE.

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIRS OF THE RECLUSE
OF THE MOUNTAINS.

A Sequel to the Story of "The Man in the Moon."

PHANTASMAGORIA I.

PECOULIAR HALLUCINATIONS.

The following pages, written by me, "the Recluse of the Mountains," relate to my late experiences while a solitary dweller in this cave, and to the auspicious events constituting the history of my previous career. They were commenced on the night of the 10th of September, 1780 A. D., ushering in the first day of the seventh month Tishri, the Jewish New Year, 5540 A. M. With the last stroke of twelve from my old Schwarzwald clock, which hangs on the eastern wall of my secluded habitation, I threw down the quill which I had plied incessantly since early morning. My self-imposed task was done at last. The final sentence on the Aerolite containing the wonderful story of "The Man in the Moon," which fell from heaven at my door, is transcribed from the Hebrew characters into the English language. The whole narrative told therein is before me. There I sat, with my poor throbbing head, white from age, like the glistening stalactites which surrounded me, resting in my thin, emaciated hands. Nothing disturbed the nocturnal quiet, except now and then the monotonous chirping of crickets or the far-away dismal hooting of owls. Irresistibly, a strange, unaccountable feeling crept over me. Now that this phenomenal work is completed, I am impelled to record what I feel, and what I remember of my past life.

I am under a spell of sadness and mental

depression which is almost overpowering. In this melancholy mood, the whole story on the Intaglios involuntarily passes before my excited vision. Scene after scene, as if imbued with life and assuming realistic existence, rolls in quick succession before my eyes. Staring, almost frenzied, at the passing shadow-pictures, I first am astonished, then startled, by a gradually growing revelation—started like an infinitesimal speck on a far-away horizon. The strange vision expands by degrees into shape and form, as it draws nearer and nearer, until at last its giant proportions rage over the world like a destructive storm. An invisible hand draws slowly but steadily the veil from my recollections, which seem to have been dormant. The clouds part, and the sky in the far-away distance becomes light. Little by little it dawns upon my dumbfounded mind that I, hapless being, have been interwoven with the web and woof of these conglomerated annals; that I have been an actor—nay, a chief actor—an incessant participant and eye-witness to the astounding events, the record of which fell at my door from heaven. Am I demented? Are these my hands? Is this my breast in which the staggered heart beats and palpitates as if it would break through its prison-house? Is this my fever-burning head, in which the brain on fire seeks to burst the adamantine seams of my water-dripping brow? Horrible! horrible! No other mortal was ever compelled to undergo the terrors and consternation which are now upon me. I see it all, I see it all! Great God! have I, Thy miserable creature, been spared for this? Was stagnant life preserved to be suddenly again animated into the vortex of existence, to realize this dire, this overwhelming knowledge? My whole body quivers in anguish; while my white hair

rises on end, clutched by my bony, convulsive hands. Springing to my feet, I stand erect, gloating upon the apparition before me. Century after century rolls with blood-begrimed records, in huge cylinder-forms, before my face. Everywhere my name! Everywhere my likeness! In a thousand different shapes, but my name, my person! Out with the terrible fact! out with the staggering truth: "I am Balaam, the ever-living Moabite!" Now I know it; now I realize it! I am indeed that execrated being, hurled back from the moon to the earth by the hands of the prophet Elijah!

As I came down headlong, vaulting through the measureless space, I recorded in my brain and heart a fearful oath, at which the universe must have shuddered. *I vowed in my blind wrath that from the moment when my feet should touch the ground of mother earth, for my doom as "the Wandering Gentile," I would forever prove the hunting, cursing, sworn, maledicted, fell destroyer of Peace, Liberty and Right. My sole purpose in the mundane world should be henceforth to arraign the thrones and churches against the people, crushing Truth, Freedom and Law. In this I mean to employ all the evil agencies and passions to which the gross, low nature of man is heir, combating with all the powers of hell the progress of civilization. Such shall be the unremitting task and revenge through coming ages, of him who forever must be known as "BEN BEOR, THE ANTI-MESSIAH!"*

When I realized the truth of what seemed at first a fearful hallucination I fell prostrate to the ground. How long I lay unconscious there I cannot tell. But at last reason returned. I then rose staggering to my feet, approaching the table. The first thing which I noticed, to my utter dismay,

was that the clock which I during all these periods had so assiduously kept going, stood still; the hands showed midnight. Now I had lost the means of knowing time. It was, however, night outside, yet. I had grown calm and collected; but the recollections of a few hours previous were upon me still. Feeble and debilitated as I felt, my efforts to rise at last succeeded. As I leaned for support upon the table, my eyes were mechanically directed to the inkstand, pens and paper. I tried to arrange in some order the blank leaves which were scattered about, but I was so weary and sleepy it seemed almost impossible for me to collect them. I am perfectly sure that all I did then was to draw the rustic chair to where I stood, and dropping into it, fall away into deep slumber. I would be willing now to swear that I never touched a pen. Suddenly I was aroused by a faint knocking at the entrance of my cavern. In the first glow of a chill September morn, as darkness seemed to wrestle with light for supremacy, there stood a tall, erect form, draped in white, shroud-like garments. In his right arm he held a scroll, such a one as I had sometimes seen when I visited a Jewish synagogue; it is called "Sefer Hatorah." In his left hand, that hung carelessly by his side, he grasped a peculiarly shaped ram's horn. These things struck me first; then I looked at the face. Semi-dark as it was everywhere as yet, I riveted my eyes upon the features; they became lit up gradually unto brilliancy. The whole head was soon radiant with a halo of light. It was a beautiful face—dignified, almost austere, yet complacent and beaming with mildness and benevolence. The most conspicuous characteristic of it was the long silver-white hair and beard, speaking of old age; with wonderfully preserved youthful and healthy features, and without a wrinkle or

a line, revealing strong and buoyant virility entirely unlooked for at such time of life. Where had I seen this countenance before? He certainly was no stranger. Then it occurred to me, as if by a stroke of lightning clearing for an instant the dark enveloping my memory, it was the same person whom I had beheld at the horrible instant when I was hurled from the moon earthward—the identical individual who then and there had pronounced my doom and judgment—the prophet Elijah! So here he comes again to taunt me, the irrepressible foe who has followed me throughout my whole long, cursed life's career, ever thwarting my plans, ever warding off the final blow from my hands, ever defying my strongest efforts, part and parcel of my task of vengeance: "*To drive from the face of the earth the Israelites, his people, whom he vaunted to have been selected as 'God-chosen' for the promulgation of the law, embodied in that book of inspired revelation called the Torah.*" There he stands again, as if to show me by contrast that I have grown aged, feeble, debilitated and impotent, and he, though venerable in appearance, yet strong, full of vigor, powerful and almost rejuvenated. But I will show the impertinent intruder that I yet have strength in these arms, that my rage nerves my muscles with former giant strength, that I yet can be agile and quick! I made one strong effort and sprang toward him, intent to throttle him if my fingers should get at his throat. Alas! my contentions with him, my counter-wanderer, are all futile. As I leaped to approach him he set the horn in his left hand to his mouth, blows one long, quivering blast, which with a thousand echoes reverberated from the mountains, and then is gone, the vision disappearing as if in the air. Slowly, and dismayed, I creep back to my seat. My eyes

fall now upon the top sheet of my pile of writing paper. I can barely trust my senses. It is covered with this story and some of those infernal Hebrew characters which had so worried me to translate during the last years. What does it all mean? I never had traced them. Curiosity and excitement hastened my will and I set to work to transcribe the Bible verse. I see it at a glance—they are the self-same Chaldaic words which a finger of fire traced on the walls of the Babylonian king Belshazzar! Do they forebode, too, my miserable doom?

“M’ne”: The Lord hath numbered thy power and hath made an end of it.

“T’kcl”: Thou hast been weighed in the balance and been found wanting. (Daniel v. 25.)

Why just now this strange coincidence? Is this another taunt from my arch-enemy? or is it—yes, it must be so—it is a supernatural warning—the conviction grows upon me—my blasted career draws to an end, my work is nearly done! The ages of my anti-messianic mission have passed by. I feel now an irresistible instinct to write—to record in full the annals of my abortive efforts. I have been during the past the right hand and mainstay of the thrones and churches, to combat the inalienable rights and liberty of the people. I knew that this was a fight for life or death against the race who carried as their strongest and, as is now proved, invincible weapon, the Mosaic law. Had it been possible for me to annihilate those people, or that Book, or both, the living, ever-spreading representative embodiment of One God, One Law, One Liberated Humanity—the tyrant master would have kept his slave, nobility and caste would have ruled the serfs, priestcraft would have swayed over reason and truth. The struggle has been in vain.

These people live; that Book lives! Here upon this soil of America I had determined abroad, from whence I came, to make one more last onslaught. The Jews, who came here to find refuge from me, their old tormentor, soon would, as I hoped, forsake the laws and traditions of their ancestry. Speculating upon this when far away, I fancied that by insidious strides they at last would voluntarily surrender the stronghold of power, their Bible. With this great advantage I reasonably calculated to work their ultimate ruin on this continent. I had planned also to bring the land back under the heels of some conquering tyrant who, with aid of the fanatical church, would re-establish the old despotic order of things. Vain rebel that I am against the over-ruling, all-guiding decrees of Providence, God the One! Never before in the history of man was the holy-titled Book in the hands of such multitudes; never has it been read, studied, understood, loved and revered to the immeasurable extent by any other nation like this American. Where it formerly was but in the possession of the Israelites, a few monks, prelates and students of the Christians, here it has spread into every house, hut and tent. The millions stand around it like bulwarks and guard its tenets, laws and principles as if their very existence depended upon its safety. Directly emanating from the core of its teachings, Freedom, under panoply of the whole power of a new government, is arrayed to end on this continent the last vestige of despotism. Having spilled the blood of her sons like water; poured out with unstinted hands her treasures; victory everywhere perches upon her banners. I foresee it all now—Monarchy is doomed! Right, Truth and Tolerance will prevail! When these facts shall be officially promulgated, I, Balaam Ben Beor, must—and let me say it, thank God—will gladly die!

The measureless extent of my various crimes may be perhaps to some degree assuaged now, by correcting with all the force I still possess a terrible misunderstanding assiduously fostered and cunningly disseminated by myself and my countless guilty emissaries. These were and are, often even more than their principal, zealous to work all over this globe. Our foul stratagem consisted and is as yet strenuously maintained in the most embittering policy, that during all these long and weary ages it has been the "Christian Religion" which acted and acts as the persistent, never-to-be-reconciled persecutor among its own sects and of the Hebrew people. This calumny has been industriously used, especially when the great masses by our schemes wallowed in ignorance and were fired by fanaticism. But let it be here promulgated as an incontrovertible fact, which the wider it may be known the more it will help the efficacy of my penance:—

"That never since the advent of Him of 'Nazareth,' who, if the story of his life as reported in the New Testament is correct, was himself a scion of the house of Judah, and the lowliest member of the race; never played treason or acted cruel and uncharitable to his brethren. He, on the contrary, in his words and professions, was the most loving, humble, humane, sympathetic and most worldly poor. Never since his coming, unto this day, has a true follower, an honest, conscientious member of his church and her ideal mission, raised arm or tongue for deed or word in persecution, hatred or malignity against any other creed or race. On the contrary, these loved humanity as all children of the same Father, rejoiced in their well-being, commiserated their suffering, and charitably lent a helping hand wherever it was needed. In this sense and throughout their virtuous and faithful life,

they aimed to prove to all doubters that indeed in Jesus the Redeemer had appeared."

Alas! it will now take a long time before the world shall realize that it has been exclusively "the Ben Beor," the Anti-Messiah and his cohorts, who, under all kinds of successful disguises, have taken on mostly the garb of cant in close imitation of religion. We raged on earth with fire, sword, death, destruction, and tears, under different names, titles and pretensions. *Combining together the interest and policies of the State and Church, and in the name of one or the other, we sowed the seeds of hatred and contentions, causing wars, emeutes and bloody revolts; doing the work of Satan, so as to make him ultimately the primate of this globe, neutralizing, effectually combatting and thwarting the work of Moses the Teacher and Jesus the Reformer.*

What masks, agencies, passions, vices and crimes were employed, and the part I played in these monstrous revels of shame, sin and death, form the material of the work which I now feel impelled, as if by an uncontrollable frenzy, to collect from the tablets of my vivified memory.

Even while engaged in these thoughts, preliminary to the task, a wonderful phenomenon makes itself vividly perceptible to my strangely agitated soul. Take whatever period I will in the long record which I propose to perpetuate, and instantly I behold the long bygone scenes in every detail, like living pictures in brilliant colors, somewhat in the shape of panoramic views. *These rise on yonder towering wall of this cave, which in alabaster whiteness faces me from where I am seated.* Occurrences, acts, faces, drapery and every incident connected with any of these affairs, are brought out distinctly and realistically, to such an

extent that I almost fancy that I were living over again that special part of my history upon which momentarily I have fixed the focus of my brain, in order to pen its records under the auspicious and impressive title of "Phantasmagoria." This will cause my writing to become true facsimiles of the tableaux-vivants, which rise instantaneously at the command of my spiritual vision.

When soon hereafter the annals of my poisonous instrumentalities for the havoc which I have made during the many centuries since I returned from the moon to this earth, shall be completed, may then the almighty and all-merciful Lord pardon to some redeemable degree the quivering, despairing soul of the shadow-author.

BALAM BEN BEOR,
The Wandering Gentile and Anti-Messiah.

PHANTASMAGORIA II.

TITUS AND BERENICE.

Hurled through eternal space, ever conscious of my doom—the malediction of the Anti-Messiah—after the lapse of six centuries I landed at last on earth. Was it accident or a well-planned design? My feet touched the ground near Mount Moriah, at the period when, for the second time, the temple of the Lord was threatened with destruction, and the land of His chosen people invaded by a most powerful foreign foe, the Roman Emperor Vespasian, represented by his son, the august Titus. The siege of Jerusalem had lasted for months. In spite of every attack, the intrepid, beleaguered Hebrews held out undauntedly against their assailants.

These were about to abandon an effort so costly in life and treasure. A council of war had just been concluded, and several of the wearied commanders spoke in favor of withdrawing from a place which was visibly under the protection of God. But Titus would not listen to such a proposition. A last desperate and concentrated attack upon the walls of the temple was resolved upon for the next day, the fatal ninth of "Av." At this juncture I joined the Romans, and was intrusted with command of some troops, in consequence of my profession of bitterest hatred against the Jews and the avowed raging thirst for vengeance to be visited upon the whole nation. Near evening of the next day my chance came. A sally from the temple had been risked by the reckless Hebrews; but after desperately fighting for a short time they were overthrown and forced precipitately to retreat. Great confusion ensued. Amidst this I, at the head of my small command, succeeded in scaling the ramparts of the citadel on the western side of the temple. With crazy eagerness I leaped down into the inner court. Recovering instantly from the stunning fall, to the consternation of a few priests just offering their vesper oblations I hastened to the altar where the sacred fire was briskly burning, snatched a brand from the heap, and running with it hither and thither, ignited the gold-brocaded draperies which hung everywhere in the immense edifice. In this I was now assiduously aided by my followers. Quicker than one may tell it, the whole imposing interior was a sea of conflagration. All now became consternation among the surprised defenders, who with fearful, piercing cries ran about in utmost confusion.

Amidst this havoc I directed my eyes to where the silver ball in the now blood-tinted sky walked

majestically through the fantastic clouds. There I plainly beheld the man who had so effectually hurled me back to earth from my former lunar abode. Every thought of mine was elated by the consummate vengeance which I had wrought upon him, my persecutor. Forward I sprang to the "Bihma" at the extreme eastern wall—ever forward until I reached the Holiest of Holy, where never before Gentile had entered. Near the consecrated shrine, a grandiose semicircle of preciously clothed scrolls of the law shone in the brilliancy of the lights from the golden, seven-armed candlestick. Rushing to the parchments with the fury of a madman, I tore from these witnesses of the Lord's bounty to Israel the mantles in which they were draped, and casting one after another from their resting-places, unrolled and trampled upon them until the whole collection lay in one confused mass at my feet. The uproar of destruction from within the edifice accompanied my frenzied acts of vengeance. Then I started forth again to where the monstrous fire-fiend wrought in horrible splendor his unparalleled scenes of sublime terror. Now, with the laughter of a demon I sprang ahead to a point where the raging element seemed to have concentrated its awful force. At this instant I saw Emperor Titus, with his mistress Berenice, the royal daughter of the Maccabeans, rush in through the now open "Golden Gate." He looked haggard and disappointed. Coming near where I stood, he cried out in almost unearthly tones: "Save the Temple! Stay the fire!" He might as well have commanded that the light of the Levanah shining over us be extinguished. The Roman cohorts, assisted by their foreign barbarian allies, were perfectly uncontrollable. Actuated, however, by a momentary impulse, eager to show my zeal to serve my new master, I

threw myself headlong into the vortex of the fire. The last I heard now was the voice of a woman imploring that I should be saved. Three of my men, in defiance of deathly danger, sprang after me and dragged me back. Singed, scorched and blistered, I was barely the semblance of a man. While my rescuers, though greatly injured themselves, at once prepared a litter upon which to carry me away, I raised my tortured eyelids. Oh, rapturous—oh, overwhelming sight! I beheld, not Berenice but Merris, my loved, my fatal idol—as near alike to the daughter of Pharaoh as is one drop of spring-water to another. I squirmed and trembled under the agonizing vision, making faint efforts to raise myself. Then her eyes fell upon my distorted, terror-inspiring form. She nigh fainted, and would have fallen had she not been caught in the arms of her consort, who bore her to the only place of safety—the shrine where I so lately had been busy with my vandal, sacrilegious work. I now became unconscious. When I recovered I found myself sheltered in the Roman camp, attended by their best physicians.

My attendants and visitors related to me thereafter the harrowing incidents as they occurred hour after hour and day after day, surpassing the wildest imagination in ferocity, cruelty and unprecedented persecutions. The whole land was as one charnel-house. They told me that nearly one million men, the entire defensive force of these people, lay as festering corpses on the highways; that those not killed were sold in the public markets as slaves. Loaded with chains, they were taken captives to every quarter of the empire. How full was the punishment of this cursed race! Had I not with my own hands destroyed beyond restoration every copy of their holy books? Not one, as far as I

knew, escaped the greedy flames. How I gloated over the fullness of my well-accomplished work of the most complete destruction! Was my self-imposed mission on earth already realized? Lying there in my comfortable quarters, all suffering and pangs were assuaged and recovery hastened by the gratifying consciousness of the fearful havoc which I had so successfully wrought upon him who had judged me so sternly above, and upon my mundane adversaries here below. Now I was satisfied that the future historian would write upon this eventful epoch of Rome's victory, "Perditas Judaica!" Alas! how often ever after have I flattered my vain hopes with this self-same delusion!

On no other ground can I explain or account for the distinguished and continued care and attention which were bestowed upon me by direction and command of the general-in-chief, than by a mistake under which he and his mistress labored. They believed that the injuries which I had received were in direct consequence of my efforts in obedience to the command of Titus to save the temple by extinguishing the flames. It seems that the lady in her great pity had taken me under her special protection and care.

Repeated inquiries were made from headquarters concerning the progress of my health, accompanied by orders to my attendants that nothing which would hasten my recovery was to be left undone, so that as soon as possible I might be taken to the imperial city of Rome. After a week's careful nursing I was deemed well enough to depart. A princely conveyance appeared at the door of my lodgings. Careful porters started with me for the first day's journey Westward. The officer in charge had been instructed to proceed slowly and make but short daily distances. Towards

noon on the first day of our travel, we arrived at the little city of Modin. Here we halted for the night. In advance there had been prepared the best quarters to be found, and I was carried into a house which belonged, as I was told, to a favorite of the emperor, the distinguished Hebrew Rabbi Jochanan ben Sakkai. For some eminent service, he, after having been carried in a coffin, shamming death, from beleaguered Jerusalem, was permitted to settle here with a colony of his students. Thence started the fatal nucleus of my future fate, a school for the maintenance and propagation of the "Law of Moses." Imagine my chagrin and disappointment when I must see, on passing through the hall of my hostelry, any number of those hated scrolls lying before the youths seated at the feet of their master, listening with glowing zeal to his enthusiastic words. Stung to the soul by finding so soon and so unexpectedly foiled and shattered my fond belief of having destroyed those cursed parchments beyond recovery, gladly would I have set the torch to this house during the short interval that I was destined to dwell here. But I was not left unattended during all this time for a single moment; nor dared I propose any such plan to one of my company; for there is in the mind of these people, in the whole catalogue of crimes none more hated and despised than an offense against hospitality. Lying awake long into the night, pondering upon the probable consequences which this untoward discovery might have upon the future of the Jews and my own mission, I at last consoled myself with the reflection—the most delusive perhaps in all my career—that such an insignificant remnant of former glory and power would shrivel from its trivial proportion into nothingness and be swallowed up and lost amidst the huge calami-

ties now striding rampant over all Palestine. Who could have surmised that in such an insignificant dwelling, under this frail roof, the seed was being planted that would grow and ripen, through which the fall of the temple and the cruel dispersion of the Hebrews should become but links in the great chain whereby ultimately would be spanned the whole religious world? And yet, history has so proved it! At last, after long hours, I fell into a short, troubled sleep, to be awakened at day-break, when we started on our further travel towards the imperial city. After many eventless days had passed we saw at last, far away, the domes and spires of our destination. Here we met Titus, the victorious conqueror of the East, returning home with his all-successful army and the spoils and captives of a hundred battles. It was a spectacle baffling description. A triumphal entry of troops into the Eternal City soon took place.

First came, in wild and fantastic procession, mounted on the swift horses of Arabia, the finely formed Bedouins, in charge of an apparently endless train of cages, containing the most splendid and select specimens of all the brute creation to be found in the Saharan and Nubian deserts and the jungles of Asia and Africa. Amidst the roar, the howl and piercing noise of these sounded forth the shrill tones of the reed-pipes of trainers, answered, as it were, by the numerous and various voices of feathered tribes, the birds forming a rainbow of colors as they hopped and frisked to and fro in their finely braided metallic houses on top of the cages of the quadrupeds. Neither gold, labor nor cunning had been spared to collect this matchless menagerie, destined for the museums and the gladiatorial arena of the capital. Then came a troop of hunters, seated on small but wiry ponies.

All the riders had silver bugles, and the wild blasts from a thousand instruments sounding forth were heard for miles. Next paraded the Teutonic cohorts, men broad-chested and tall like giants, their blonde hair forming a strange contrast with their sunburnt skins. For miles and miles away stretched the line, borne upon the clumsy, heavy-maned horses of the North. Then followed, in brilliant array of well-polished steel breast-shields and helmets, the Egyptian and Macedonian charioteers, their animals drawing the terror-inspiring engines of war; they were divided in separate columns, each of which was headed by a band of trumpeters, leading with the blare of their instruments the dance-like march of this part of the army. Now followed a section of the imperial body-guards, caparisoned most gorgeously, their crimson-velvet cloaks falling in graceful folds over their feet as they appeared like statues upon fiery chargers. Their large brows, aquiline noses, brilliant eyes and haughty mien declared in every feature the proud Romans. Each one had a battle-ax fastened to the pommel of his gold-embroidered saddle, and bore a halberd in his right hand. These were succeeded by the most wonderful train of artistic representations of the carver, chiseler and painter; rich combinations of costly woods, ivory, silver and gold in every imaginable form and size, representing the historical occurrences of the East, delineating the wars, victories and triumphs of Rome. Between each section of these trophied reminiscences, singers and musicians vied with each other, telling in verse and rhythm the story of their glory.

These passed, and then came in seemingly endless array the treasure-laden vehicles, carrying the spoils of war; elephants and camels in charge of dusky Moors brilliantly arrayed, bearing priceless

gems of despoiled nations. The last of the wagons contained the golden vessels, solid shew-table, seven-armed candlestick, and the glistening "Tablets of the Law"—immense geological specimens of diamond-like lustrous double plates, in which were cut, as it is said "by the finger of the Lord," from one side to the other, the letters forming the world-renowned Decalogue; through the quaint openings of which the morning sun played with a wreath of rays, crowning them with a shield of colors and light of inexpressible beauty and magnificence. If I could but have laid my hands for eternal destruction upon this one all-peerless possession! At the sight of it I felt sick at heart, and inwardly vowed that if it came within the reach of possibilities I would, at some near time and at any risk, get hold of this concentrated essence of Mosaic wisdom, the foundation of Jewish legislation, and utterly destroy it. While such burning thoughts were yet astir in my covetous bosom this pageant had passed. Another appeared, coming as if to create the most marked contrast with all the splendor and wealth of the previous procession. Upon a rude platform, drawn by four sturdy mules, guarded on each side by a detachment of swarthy spearmen, loaded down in chains, with a rope around his massive neck, covered the gigantic form of the most illustrious among the Hebrew captives, the renowned hero of the siege of Jerusalem—one who had been a terrible host in himself against the invaders—the dreaded Simon bar Giora. According to the irrevocable rite of Roman Triumphals he is the chosen sacrifice. The sad strains of a dead-march from a powerful band of brass instruments rend the air as he passes out of sight. Silver trumpets, however, take up the mournful chords and change them with wonderful transposition into

jubilant fanfares. Next, two brilliantly arrayed open coaches, each drawn by four horses, make their appearance. One contains the young emperor's favorite, his Hebrew ally, the historian Flavius Josephus, with three of his intimate friends and relatives by his side; the other is occupied by the pusillanimous Jewish courtier-prince, Agrippa, brother of the royal Berenice. Then cantered into sight, preceded and followed by a line of chosen bodyguards, the young emperor Titus, riding a coal-black charger, and on a milk-white steed at his side the queenly daughter of Judea, the matchless princess Berenice. Far behind them loomed up the endless native and foreign legions, guarding between them the unfortunate Jewish captives, men, women and children, loaded with chains, most pitiful to behold in their despair and misery, computed to have exceeded one hundred thousand persons.

Finally came the rabble and the usual hangers-on of an army returning victorious from a foreign land. All this vast multitude now arrived on the plain, stretching picturesquely away to where stood the temple of Isis. With the words of command by superior officers, as if by magic, presently an orderly, well-planned encampment disclosed itself. The imperial pair, as they passed us, sent one of their servants, bidding my officer to fall in line behind them. As they dismounted and ascended the stairs to the holy dais, they were greeted by the father-emperor Vespasian and his younger son Domitian, the senate and the venerable priests of the goddess. Then sire and son met in most affectionate embrace. Such a shout of joy and exultation arose from the soldiers and the assembled people as was never before heard by mortal ears. I had remained at the foot of the extensive platform and

from there could see, hear and watch the ensuing solemn ceremonies and usages preceding always the triumphal entry of an emperor into the Eternal City. But amidst all these pompous observances, the magnificent music, the galaxy of vestals, the priests in their silver-brocaded robes with the sacred paraphernalia, the orations and prayers attending the auspicious festivities of the day, my eyes were fixed solely upon one object, the queenly and exceedingly beautiful woman who stood between the two sons of the old emperor Vespasian, the Jewess matchless in grace and dignity. Wavy hair, raven black, held together on the finely poised head by a tiara of gold studded with glittering sapphires and diamonds; lustrous, large eyes fringed with long lashes and laughing with fire and brilliancy; finely-traced lines of an aquiline nose, coraline lips, round chin, fully-developed bust, showing like alabaster from the neck down to where priceless lace covered the swelling bosom; a figure grand and majestic, draped in a wealth of silk and velvets; silver sandals disclosing abnormally small feet, hands exquisitely white and moulded as if by a master-sculptor, sparkling with an untold wealth of priceless gems—such was the princess Berenice. No wonder the ardent Titus, fascinated by all this loveliness and beauty, had pledged his troth to her, by which, on his ascension to the throne, she was to share the sovereignty of the civilized world.

Amidst all the jubilation I, keenly watching, noticed the old emperor and his youngest son repeatedly cast malignant glances at the beautiful object of my feverish attention.

The imperial party at last entered their circular golden carriage, and the procession took up its march along the Via Sacra.

Lost in strange speculations concerning Merris,

my Egyptian ideal, re-embodied in the radiant, glorious Hebrew woman, I was suddenly awakened by a mounted guard approaching my conveyance. Unrolling a large scroll bearing the imperial seal, he conveyed to me the message that it had pleased the young emperor to honor me with the high commission of proceeding forthwith, in advance of the procession, to the Capitoline hill with the doomed captive Simon bar Giora, and proclaiming to him the sentence of death, see him scourged according to the prescribed rites, and thrown down the declivity unto destruction. This done, to bring the news to the waiting emperors and populace. For this purpose I was now comfortably placed on the platform beside the prisoner, and saluting him with the well-known greeting of "Salam alichum," by which he took me to be a compatriot, and having smilingly responded with the usual "Alichum Salam," we rode together the long distance to the hill. Conversing with him cordially in the Hebrew language, I soon succeeded in gaining his confidence and in extracting from him the story of his eventful life.

PHANTASMAGORIA III.

SIMON BAR GIORA.

During the last days of my stay near Jerusalem, while the appalling struggle raged over Palestine, I had heard much of the noble character of the doomed prisoner. I now sought to obtain the true facts concerning the life and deeds of this hapless Simon bar Giora, and here they are as told me by himself. He said:

"Born and bred at Gerasa in Palestine, among

the shepherds who roamed with their cattle and flocks over the wide hills and vales which surround this ancient city of East Arabia, at an early age I imbibed from this class the rude spirit of independence and rugged freedom. I soon exercised a kind of leadership among my companions. When the war with the Romans broke out and news reached us how sorely our people were pressed by the invader, a large number of us resolved to go to their aid. Leaving our herds in charge of the old men, about ten thousand of us gathered, and having elected me their chieftain, an army was organized.

“Treasures flowed in upon us from all sides. A large number of slaves were held by the people in this district. These by proclamation were now freed on condition that they would join our troops. They gladly complied, thereby swelling our numbers to over twenty thousand. With the assistance of officers and lieutenants appointed by me, I set to work day and night to train our men in the use of arms and the strictest discipline of soldiers.

“By good fortune, there were among the slaves, foreigners who had been sold here as prisoners. These old veterans were familiar with tactics and military science. Placing my troops, ignorant of such requirements, entirely in their charge, by incessant work they were soon in good condition, ready to take the field. I had thus an efficient and obedient corps of soldiers, as brave as ever assembled for the defense of homes, altars and firesides. Finding myself then at the head of such an immense body of faithful and well-drilled men, all my dormant powers of pride, ambition and patriotism were aroused in fiercest strength, and I vowed to myself that I would liberate my people of Israel from their enemies, or perish in the attempt. I did not know the fearful task I had undertaken.

Alas! too soon did I learn that our worst adversaries were not the foreign invaders. Among certain ranks of other troops our leaders were arrayed against one another in deathly strifes and contentions, several sects and clans contending among themselves for supreme power. Treason stalked over the land, and selfish, faint-hearted, pusillanimous cowards were headed by Flavius Josephus. He might have stayed the downfall of the nation, but deserted to the enemy, and for prospective favors betrayed the secrets of our strength and the points of our weaknesses to his newly acquired friends. Nay, all these left behind in their accursed course, secret allies, who by mutual understanding sent into the camp of the enemy, instead of deadly arrows, papyrus-slips which contained information of every move planned in our lines. It is unnecessary to enumerate all the dangerous exploits which fell to my share. They are now part of the history of our unfortunate nation. One phase in my trying career will illustrate the cruel difficulties and unpardonable repulses which I suffered at the hands of some would-be leaders. From reports which I had received by trusty spies I knew that concentrated attacks with all the available power of the Romans would shortly be made upon sorely harassed Jerusalem. I thought it therefore imperatively necessary to leave my secure stronghold in the citadel of Mesada and by hurried marches proceed to the capital. Arrived there, the several parties in command, although raging against one another like bloodthirsty tigers, fearing that they might lose some of their power, united in refusing me and my legions admittance to the city. Nay, they concocted and carried out the plot of capturing my wife, whom I had left with friends at Mesada. Speculating upon the love which I bore

her, this my weak spot being known among my adherents and foes, a deputation was sent from the city with the message that we must immediately surrender and deliver up our arms, or, refusing, her life and that of her attendants should pay the forfeit of my obstinacy. This made me furious! In my rage I raised my battle-ax and smote their leader to death, then hacking off the hands of the rest I sent them back, vowing that if but a hair of the head of my spouse or that of any of her friends were touched I would break down the walls of the city, and spare neither age nor sex until I should be fully avenged.

“The sight of the dead leader and his mutilated companions quickly changed the boisterous rejoicings of the wily commanders over their victory upon a few weak, resistless women, into bitter lamentations and despair, and despite the remonstrances of traitors, hirelings in the service of the foreign besiegers, the captive females were permitted to depart in peace, and a safety-guard given to securely conduct the glad prisoners into our encampment. Never again did these scheming leaders trifle with my anger. On the contrary, it chanced very soon thereafter that the populace, becoming disgusted with and mortally afraid of their overbearing and tyrannical military rulers, their high-priest Matthias, with a princely escort, issued forth in procession from the Golden Gate, came to my tent and besought me to follow him with my soldiers into the terribly afflicted city. We entered amidst great rejoicings and were received with open arms by large numbers.

“I set myself to work without delay for the defense of the strongholds and the reunion of the fierce factions who tore asunder the best strength of the people. In this, however, I was continually

thwarted and foiled by the unceasing machinations of the traitors, who would gladly have welcomed Titus and his troops into the holy tabernacle. When the Hebrews, despite their dissensions, showed themselves so bravely determined to defend their possessions or die in the combat, the miserable renegades who fawned and flattered around our Roman tormentors betrayed to the enemy the last secret which they thus far had inviolably kept, the subterranean passageways by which the country folks supplied overpeopled Jerusalem with food for men and beasts. These tunnels were, after the most bloody struggle of the whole war, taken possession of by our assailants, and in consequence thereof fearful and abject famine fell upon us all. We could have fought hosts and withstood the battering rams, but hunger and the terrible sight of the starving and famishing women and children soon unmanned the strongest and the bravest. Such was the work of the miscreant Josephus and his tribe of renegades who stigmatized me with the title of a tyrant. Then came the fire which consumed the temple and the city. The strongest minds lost heart. God seemed to have everywhere forsaken our people. His hand lay crushingly upon us. Yet I did not even then despair. Quickly I summoned together my followers. We made our way first to the lower chambers of the temple. Here we supplied ourselves with stonecutters' tools, and appropriated from the magazines such stores of food-sustenance as had been laid up for times of greatest need. I led the way to a subterranean passageway yet undiscovered by the enemy, calculating that we might cut an outlet to the opposite side of the temple and city, and from new strongholds renew the battles for our national existence. All was not lost if this plan succeeded.

We soon reached the end of the underground excavations, and then the men set to work to quarry out the rest of the way. Our provisions, however, had to be carefully husbanded, and supplies distributed in scant measure. The nature of the rock revealed itself at an early date to be beyond our strength, and, to my horror, the laborers, utterly fatigued, threw down their tools and declared that it was beyond the power of human strength and endurance to proceed further with a work that showed such infinitesimal results. Hope, faith and the last vestige of enthusiasm had ebbed away—I had reached the end of my resources. I determined upon one last effort, which offered but the faintest ground for success. In one of the recesses of the lower caverns I had found secreted the white linen garments and the velvet purple cloak of the high-priest. Attired in these, I proposed to appear suddenly among the superstitious foreign guards who watched over the ruins of the holy edifice. My followers were to keep close to me, and when they saw the scared victors take to flight, fall upon them and fight their way out of the city to places of safety. I played my part well. As I emerged so suddenly and unexpectedly from out of the earth, the surprised Romans hastily took to their heels. Alas! my men, discouraged and despairing, had stayed behind, only to be slaughtered like sheep, when the fugitives, recovering from their scare, seeing that no one followed, returned and took me prisoner.

“Yet I would not reveal to this common rabble who their captive was, but demanded the presence of their commander. He was sent for immediately and came in great haste. I recognized him as the most implacable and bloodthirsty of any tyrant who ever bore semblance to a human

being—the thrice-accursed murderer and villain, Rufus, surnamed by the Hebrews ‘the Terrible.’ I disclosed to him my name and defied him to do his worst. I was stripped of my priestly vestments, leaving me barely enough of dress to hide my nakedness; loaded down with chains and thrown into a deep and dark dungeon. I knew well what was to be my fate, and utterly callous of what was to come, resigned myself uncomplainingly to the future. Thou knowest the rest.”

Here he stopped. During the recital, the swarthy face of this giant-like person was suffused with tears, no doubt the first he had wept since his childhood. By this time we had arrived at our destination; the weary team came to a halt, and two lictors in readiness, before a great multitude, shoutingly took possession of the unfortunate captive. They subjected him in my presence, bound as he was hand and foot, to the most cruel flagellation, scourging and torments. The blood trickled over his naked back and chest, but not a muscle stirred; not a sign of pain showed itself in mien or gesture of this brave soldier. He smiled contemptuously through it all. At last, when they fancied that his strength had succumbed to their torture, the two officers loosened the shackles on his arms, previous to the fearful plunge over the precipice which was soon to send him to his destruction. Instantly, when he felt himself thus partly freed, and before I even could execute my official commission to read to him the death-warrant, with one mighty effort he grasped his tormentors, and, crying out like Samson of old, “With mine enemies will I die this day!” he made of his own accord the fearful plunge with them into eternity. Not a sound was heard but the thumping of the bodies against the crags and rocks as the

dead bodies fell to the never-explored bottom. Long before I reached the "Arch Triumphal," inscribed with the ominous words, "Judea capta," where the emperors and people were awaiting my arrival, the shouts of the masses had proclaimed the final consummation of the death-sentence on their illustrious victim. The imperial procession set itself again into motion towards the capitol, for the final rites of the glorious Triumphal. The broad thoroughfare over which our march now proceeded was a blaze of most costly and tasteful decorations; all balustrades and windows were ornamented with flags, pennons and patriotic designs of the richest material, and the street, inclusive of every available place where the procession could be seen, was lined with men, women and children in holiday attire. They shouted themselves hoarse with the ever-repeated acclamations: "*Viva Emperores, viva Titus; deliciae humani generis.*"

I was, however, much astonished at the many signs of public disfavor and indignation which were manifested towards Berenice. Frequently some group, more bold and aggressive than their companions, would point their fingers at her, and, just loud enough to be heard, cynically and sarcastically draw out the words of a double meaning, "Judea capta," which meant here unmistakably "the *Jewess* captured." All this must have been very distressing to her, and, being in close proximity, I saw, even while she smiled defiance at her tormentors, tears standing in her beautiful eyes. At last we reached the capitol. Here the sacerdotal ceremonies were completed. The emperors seated themselves in the celebrated throne-chairs of ivory and gold. While the priests passed before them into the temple of Jupiter, where they brought the sacrifices of a thousand oxen; the orators, poets and

singers recited their heroes' deeds of valor and glory. The sun set in unspeakable beauty and grandeur beyond the flaming Apenninian hills, when the two emperors rose, prayerfully invoked the blessing of the gods upon all their subjects, and finally withdrew to the night's banquets and revelry in their palaces.

Immediately thereafter the immense crowd dispersed; those exhausted from the fatigues of the long day wending their way homeward; others who had saved their strength, or were naturally able to undergo more physical strain, to the festivities which had been provided at public expense in every quarter of the city, or repairing to the theatres and numerous shows. These costly celebrations continued for three days, officials vieing with private parties to make this one of the most memorable events in the annals of Rome.

PHANTASMAGORIA IV.

BETWEEN SOYLLA AND CHARYBDIS.

There had been assigned to me and my servitors most comfortable and princely quarters near the Quirinal palace. Here I remained in retirement for several days, partly to recuperate from the fatigues of the previous long journey and the excitement attending the "Triumphal," and partly for the purpose of undergoing medical treatment, which soon restored my health and removed every vestige which the casualties of the fire at the Temple had left upon my body. Not a trace, not a mark remained by which I could be reminded of the severe injuries I had sustained,

but, on the contrary, the repeated soothing ointments and the powerful restorative baths caused my whole frame to glow with health and my appearance to become youthful.

Congratulating myself upon these gratifying experiences, I soon discovered that still greater surprises were in store for me.

One morning I found a mysterious note upon my table, inviting me urgently to an early and confidential interview with the princess Berenice. What could this woman possibly want with me? There was no earthly likelihood that she had the faintest idea of my blind affection for her. While pondering over this unexpected enigma, an imperial page summoned me to the presence of Vespasian.

Here was a dilemma! Whom should I see first? Following my individual inclination, I appointed the time for an audience with the great monarch at a later hour and dismissed the messenger.

After careful preparations as to my personal appearance, I repaired immediately to the residence of the lady. Here I must have been expected, for I was shown at once to her presence. As I entered I saw the magnificent splendor of the royal chambers, in all more like a dream than a reality. Reposing upon one of those peculiar Eastern couches which seemed to form a rich frame to a celestial portrait, pensive and sad as if just awakening from deeply troublesome reflections, was the lovely Berenice. I knelt before her, and raising the hand which hung languidly by her side, I kissed the roseate tips of her fingers. Never will I forget the rapture which thrilled me as my lips came for one glorious moment into this slight carnal contact with the to me angelic being.

She smilingly bade me welcome and motioned

me to a seat. Then she spoke: "Be not astonished that I have called thee to me. From the zeal and devotion which thou hast shown to thy superiors in the hour of great peril and at risk of thy life, I have been filled with the utmost confidence in thy fidelity and strength of character. And now that I need a trusty agent on a very important and difficult enterprise, my choice naturally has fallen upon one whom I have found to be most reliable. It now depends upon thee to decide whether thou wilt accept the post for which I have singled thee out."

"Speak, adored being!" I replied, "and all my life, every thought of my soul and every pulsation of my heart shall be devoted to thy behests!"

She appeared somewhat astonished at the warmth of my language, but with one of those bewitching glances which Hebrew women know how to employ when they wish to fasten their influence upon a man, she continued: "It is well known throughout all Rome that our young emperor in his great affection has pledged me his troth, and as soon as he ascends his father's throne will make me his wedded wife. Yet reasons which I well understand and which, as I believe, consist partly in the hatred against my valiant but unfortunate race—their conquest having cost so many precious lives and countless treasure—have caused father, brother and friends to look upon the foreign favorite with antipathy and displeasure. On that account I am greatly afraid of obstacles which might be thrown in the way of the final consummation of our connubial union. I believe that with judicious management and carefully arranged measures all these great difficulties can be overcome. My betrothed will and can best manage the obstinacy of his family. Occasion may offer, too, by which a

confidential friend, one like thee, whom I have selected for this purpose, might aid his efforts. But thy service is needed mainly to pacify the people and, if possible, change their dislike of me into genuine love and confidence. They owe me a great debt of gratitude, for it has been my sole aim and object, since I have been betrothed to the prince, to so influence and modify the harsh and brutal tendencies of his character as to change them into noble, good and lovable traits. I have no doubt when the time comes that he shall wield the sceptre of the world, he will more than deserve the flattering name already bestowed upon him, 'The Delight of Humanity.' Thou mayest help me in my great emergency. Eternal friendship, with any other favor in my power which thou mayest ask, shall be thy reward."

She held out her hand to me in the depth of her feeling, and as a token of my assent to her wishes, as is the usage of Oriental people, I was to gently bring it to my lips and bow myself to the earth. Instead of this I, however, grasped it vehemently and impressed upon it most passionate, ardent kisses. Then on my knees I vowed the most faithful and devoted service and attachment, placing my whole life and being at her command.

"Spare neither efforts nor treasures in this task," she cried out. "My wealth is inexhaustible; in my name bestow it in charity and relief wherever it may be needed. Assure all the people that it is my anxiety and highest aim to make them prosperous, happy and content. Men must be of stone if they will withstand such kindness and good-will. Go, my friend, and report to me from time to time the progress made in this undertaking, and may Divine Providence prosper and speed thee!"

With these words I was dismissed.

Laboring under the most conflicting emotions, I reached my home. I threw myself wearily upon my couch. Was I then to become the veritable instrument by which this union, so repugnant to me, should be consummated? Was I to be the means by which this man, whom I so jealously hated, should rob me of her whom I madly adored? Never!—no, never! And yet I had most solemnly promised—had made myself an abject slave in her service, and for this very object. Raps at my door brought me to a repression of my feelings. A servant announced that the hour for the audience with the old emperor was at hand; so I proceeded to the palace. Ushered into the presence of the mighty Vespasian, I found him alone, pacing up and down the stately hall. He seemed to be greatly agitated, and did not notice me on entering. At last he saw me, and smilingly approaching, spoke: “So thou hast come? Sit here by me and listen to what I have to communicate to thee.” He himself wheeled some chairs to the centre of the apartment, and occupying one, pointed me to the other. Hesitating to accept a condescension which at this all-powerful court is of the very highest favor, he impatiently motioned me to the seat.

Then he said: “The relations which I desire to establish now between us will be of the most confidential and friendly nature, and whenever we meet alone, as often no doubt we shall, let all needless formalities cease. My august son has informed me of thy fidelity, unselfishness, and dauntless courage in the face of death. I need now the services of an upright confederate in a very difficult and greatly important affair. For this I have selected thee, and if thou consent, matters of state will be entrusted to thy care, the successful solution of which will entitle thee to my lasting grati-

tude. All the world knows of the tender relations existing between my son Titus and that wily Hebrew woman Berenice. I have reliable information that, infatuated as he is with her, it was mutually understood between them that on his coming to my throne he will formally make her empress. This must never be! No offspring of the hated Semitic race shall, with my consent, hold such an elevated station among the proudest lineage of the very gods. True, I might interpose my imperative command as parent and emperor and forbid the obnoxious misalliance. But for reasons delicate yet powerful I prefer not to avail myself of this prerogative, especially as there are other equally potent means by which my object may be achieved. The Roman people are already indignant that this foreign female dare raise her haughty eyes to the crown of the Caesars. Let this aversion be stimulated and extended. While my son might, with the characteristic traits of our family, defy paternal authority, yet he will bend before the force of public indignation. Be thou the instrument to carry out this my cherished plan. Achieve it, and there shall be no honor or favor in my gift which thou mayest not ask and receive."

Even while he was speaking, thoughts, like flashes of lightning, crossed my brain, as to the policy which I was to pursue between the two high patrons. I therefore was readily prepared to make answer. "O, Emperor," I proceeded to say, "the task assigned to me, complimentary and flattering as it must be to my modest abilities and integrity, is at once arduous and expensive, requiring for its successful execution thy fullest confidence and unstinted treasures. But, most of all, it seems requisite to me that even the slightest appearance

of an intrigue between us should be avoided. This scarcely could be done were it noticed that the emperor had frequent intercourse with his humble subject. Communications, for this reason, ought to be strictly secret; should be made in writing, and transmitted by an unsuspected party. Will my gracious sovereign approve of these my views in accepting my services? I think I shall be able to carry out in reasonable length of time the desired mission. Make it, therefore, thy pleasure, sire, to find ways and means by which we may unobtrusively communicate together, whereby we silently, but effectually, shall attain our object." "Be it so, my valued friend," responded the emperor, "and whatever wealth or influence thou mayest require shall be at thy command. The details concerning our intercommunication will be imparted to thee as soon as I shall have time to perfect the same. And be once again assured, on the day when the hated woman leaves Rome forever, thy fortune, as far as I can build it, shall be made." Then we parted.

At my abode, new perplexities awaited my coming. A man, covered in cloak and hood so as not to be recognizable, was walking impatiently up and down the rooms. As soon as I entered he threw off his disguise and approached me. "So at last thou hast come!—it seemed an eternity while I waited for thy return. Never before has Titus been compelled to so exercise patience. But deeming it of first importance to meet thee, my friend, all my feelings of displeasure are vanished since thou art here, and an interview, upon which I lay great importance, may be had between us. Waive all ceremonial, approach, let us be seated, and then come without delay to an understanding."

With these words he threw himself upon a couch and motioned me to take a seat beside him. After making humble obeisance I did as bidden. He spoke, repressing, as could be easily noticed, for the time being, the real object of his presence.

“The government has been greatly troubled,” he said, “in disposing of the immense number of captives which we have brought home from the wars. Common humanity forbids their starvation, yet their support will prove an unbearable expense to the state. So the senate has this day resolved on a great public building, the Coliseum, the erection of which has long been planned, and in the execution of this our Jewish prisoners will be used, thereby earning their support. Believing that from former experiences among this turbulent element thou knowest well and understandest their nature and character, I had thee appointed chief superintendent of this enterprise, with full power to act, and with the emoluments due to such responsible station. Very little actual work is expected, as this will be done by subordinates; but there is a head needed for the undertaking. This office is one more of honor than of labor. I deem it good fortune to be the first bearer of this pleasant message, and while congratulating thee, my friend, sincerely on this distinguished appointment, would in return ask some kind personal service which thou canst render me.”

I knew from the expression of his features that the real object of his presence would now be disclosed. He then continued:

“Berenice, my betrothed, has informed me of the interview which she had with thee this day. I approve highly of its tenor and join warmly in its object. I know also of thy audience with my imperial father, and can readily imagine its purport,

and the perplexing situation in which a loyal subject is placed by being connected with such clashing interests. Now that thou hast been made the confidant of those two high contracting parties, a solution of all the difficulties may be reached by taking into counsel the third and perhaps most important personage. Believing to have some strong claim to thy kind consideration, as the whole matter concerns but me, and as the political cause in which thou art so peculiarly enlisted might, by one precipitate action, crumble under thy feet, irretrievably ruining thee and compromising and embarrassing all parties, promise me solemnly and on thy honor that thou actually wilt do nothing for either party, while apparently humoring the schemes and conceits of both. In defense of this questionable attitude in which my commands place thee, let me express my well-matured conviction that private interests of so delicate and tender a nature are always best left to their own development. The natural course of events shapes results to greatest advantage by the non-interference of outside agencies. Trusting that thou wilt understand and coincide with me, give me thy hand as token of approval and acceptance of this my imperial will and behest."

This was indeed relief from the confounded position in which I had been so unnaturally forced. It cut the "Gordian knot" of my perplexities with one stroke. I therefore readily grasped the proffered hand, vowing, for the third time this day, compliance and obedience in a cause so near to my heart, that threatened to engulf my future presence in Rome in untold difficulties.

The young Caesar departed as he had come, in his disguise, unnoticed and undetected, leaving me relieved from my awkward engagements, but with

long and deep reflections upon the transitions of mundane affairs.

I must add here that I found no difficulty in readily disposing of the immense sums of money trusted to my keeping at the hands of the confiding woman, and that it took no additional stimulus to increase the hatred and aversion of the populace against her and her ambitious motives. My confidential relations with Vespasian, Titus and Berenice remained undisturbed.

PHANTASMAGORIA V.

A WOMAN SPURNED.

The official work which the appointment as superintendent of public works demanded of me was of the slightest character, making my position nearly a sinecure. The chief labor was performed by subordinates, requiring of me nothing more than occasionally the signing of my name to the rolls. I had therefore all the leisure which my schemes and experiments required. Loaded with favors from the high persons who thought me actively engaged in their service, I virtually did but enough to keep up an appearance of zeal and industry in the advancement of their several plots. But I remained not idle concerning my own machinations.

It is well known that the ancient city of Rome was tunneled by subterranean cloacæ, broad roadways arched and columned, forming an underground town. Here and there, where the corners of streets met, the extensive spaces were used for large squares, which no doubt had been designed by the architect who planned these catacomb-like

vaults for some public object, either as keeps for prisoners, or magazines where to preserve large stores of provisions in times of war. I was aware of the existence of these structures, and soon found out that the "domus"—such is the name of the residences of the patricians—in which I dwelt stood directly over one of these squares. There I very soon assembled some of the roughest elements of the lowest strata of humanity to be found in the city. These, by the glaring red light of pine-torches, worked day and night in the production of large quantities of the as yet unknown intoxicant. As soon as ready, I used it first for some physiological experiments to ascertain its effects upon the different nationalities congregated in our cosmopolitan metropolis.

I tried it first on the miserable creatures who produced it. They were mostly natives of the immediate Campagna. Vile and brutal as their rearing in ignorance and vice had made them, when the stimulating fire of drink coursed through their brains and blood they became actually ferocious. Such reckless, base and foolish scenes as I beheld among them; such cruel selfishness as was soon developed; such swinish passions as came into broad existence; such sanguinary thirst which without restraint agitated the whole crew, changed human beings into demons. To all appearances amidst the sharp lights and shadows, it seemed a veritable pandemonium.

Next I slyly caused its use among the Teutonic cohorts who were gathered in and around the city. They did not take kindly to it. Having brought with them from the German lands a drink of their own, they ingeniously brewed this here from barley and hops. No doubt in fermentation it developed a small percentage of my own distillation.

They frequently used this exhilarating beverage, which they boasted that their god "Gambrinus" had invented for them, and proved wary against the introduction of a new and unknown liquor. When, however, my concoction found its way to the stomachs of the sturdy sons of Teutonia, it changed their whole character. From cool, lymphatic, earnest, deliberate and quiet people, brave in the extreme, they became quarrelsome, drowsy, sullen and indifferent louts, whom neither pleasure nor danger could stir from their lethargy. The officers who were acquainted with these my debased victims quickly caused a medical investigation, thinking that a new and dreadful disease had broken out among their soldiery.

I next practised among the Anglo-Saxons and Celts, who had been brought from Britannia, after its conquest, as allies of the Roman army. They readily and greedily partook of the potion, and such was the effect upon the seduced victims as to almost reverse all the noble and fine qualities inherent in their nature. From genial, jovial, good-natured and fearless companions, they became brawling, boisterous and reckless drunkards, never satiated, ever craving for more, losing all self-control, all self-respect, at times blindly combative, boisterously furious when there was no enemy, then again cowardly whining and abjectly demure, even in the face of the foe.

My attention was next directed to the native soldiers of this sunny land. They had never partaken of anything stronger than the compressed juice of their grapes. Generally jovial, proud, self-contained and confiding to a fault, after the first taste of the intoxicating fire-water they soon became utterly unmanned and disorganized, maudlin and whimsical, momentarily changing from

one extreme of passion to the other, exhibiting themselves through the whole scale of meanness, depravity and abandon, no traces of which could previously be found in their mental composition. The use of the debasing liquid spread rapidly through all classes and grades of society. Dram-shops sprang up in every nook and corner of the seven hills, with such fearful effect as to become so notorious and widespread that the authorities felt called upon to use stringent and powerful measures for their suppression. Vain efforts forever! to try chaining the devil when he has once broken his bonds.

The last of these hellish experiments I had reserved for the captive Jews, now working and groaning under my direct and uncompromising tyranny, on the walls of the Coliseum. What kept up their hope and courage under the most exhausting and trying travail was impossible to understand. Still they toiled and labored, mumbling in faint but ever sad melody the words of a song commencing:

“By the waters of Babylon,
We hung our harps and wept.”

Here I had promised myself the richest and most prolific harvest. Why should not these desperately goaded slaves readily avail themselves of the freely proffered means of sinking all their trials, hardships and degradations into oblivion by imbibing the luring, sparkling draught that came to them freely and without expense? But to my utter amazement they would have none of it, would not touch the tempting cup. A law of theirs forbade strictly the use of any made drink not produced by their own hands. Wine of their vintage was generally used only for sacred purposes

or on festive occasions, for marriage feasts, natal celebrations and public rejoicings. In such instances, the language of their wise king, Solomon, proved true, "it gladdens the heart." With the Jews, unlike any other race, if they partook of wine to excess, the effect was manifested in good-natured wit, singing of songs, declaiming of rhapsodical speeches, and finally of a peaceful departure for home. I succeeded in making a few recreants and apostates partake of my nostrum. Their vitals being unaccustomed to the strength of this drink, they became deathly sick, and were borne to the hospitals amidst the jeers and derision of their co-religionists. Then I had recourse to stratagem, mixing small quantities of the liquor with their food; but they detected its taste, and preferring to go hungry, would not partake of the obnoxious meals. Worst of all I fared with the members of a new sect, the Nazarenes. With a velocity unparalleled in history, they had increased from a comparatively small number to an immense host. Their plain, simple and modest life of abstinence and morality had even attracted converts from the Latins, and it had become necessary for the emperor to issue an edict forbidding the joining of their church. True to their name of Nazarenes, which means "Abstainers," it was one of the chief articles of their creed never to drink aught but water. These wretches, even in their humiliation and downfallen abject dependency, proved equal to the Jews in hampering my work and resisting its progress.

Meanwhile, affairs of state transpired which materially affected my career. Vespasian had suddenly died. Seeking rest from labor in his old age, he retired to the Campagna. Common report declared that he was suddenly seized with a fatal

malady. Whispered reports, which I am not prepared to confirm or contradict, were abroad that he was in the way of his two sons and had lived long enough. Titus was immediately crowned successor and ascended the throne of his father. The coronation ceremonial over, all Rome was in sullen agitation, fearing his marriage to the detested Jewess. My surprise was intense when, three days after being made emperor, I was summoned to the young Caesar and received at his hands the commission to repair to the abode of the impatiently-waiting Berenice, with the irrevocable imperial command that she at once leave Rome, in confirmation of which I was furnished with the written edict of banishment for herself and brother, Agrippa. Special oral instruction directed me on no consideration to permit her to see Titus.

Never before had I witnessed such a display of woe, despair, wrath and anger as transpired before my eyes upon the execution of my cruel, heartless errand. At first she refused to believe until I showed her the mandate with the great seal of state. Then she appeared stunned—her breath came hard and heavy, but she did not faint, her feelings were too violent for this. Making ready in haste, she cried out: "I will see the traitor—the monster—face to face!" When I explained to her now that the emperor on no condition would have any further communication with her, she broke out in passionate weeping and sobbing. Then she turned violently upon me and exclaimed: "Dastard whom I had nursed as a devoted friend, this is all thy consummate, infernal work!" I fell on my knees before her, vowing by all in heaven and on earth that I had been but the instrument, selected only an hour before, to convey the hateful message. I implored her not to misjudge my

devotion and fidelity to her cause, protesting my utter incapacity to even in thought do or permit a wrong towards one so good and beautiful. Rising to my feet, I continued: "Listen, lady—the most wronged, the most injured who ever lived—listen to my words. Thou art now free from any duty or affection for one who has spurned thee. All feelings of love or devotion ought to be changed in thy bosom to hatred and thirst for revenge. Let me avow it here—let me now plead in my own behalf. Since I saw thee in the burning ruins of the Lord's temple, I have loved, worshipped, adored thee! Before this treachery of that base man transpired, I rather would have died than own these words to thee. Give me thy sympathy, turn thy royal heart and hands to me, and thou shalt have the most terrible and exquisite revenge that ever has satiated a revolted human soul!"

She stood at first dazed, as if unable to connect or understand these words. Then their meaning seemed slowly to dawn upon her comprehension. Presently she raised herself to full height, and, like a roused tigress, threw the weight of her whole power upon me. With the nails of her cramped fingers she tried to get at my eyes, screeching so fiercely that it must have sounded near and far. In her spasmodic strength she would have certainly thrown me to the floor but for my superhuman force, by which I hurled her from me. At the entrance of aroused servants, amidst a great noise and commotion, I essayed to escape and reach safety in flight.

The unfortunate woman took her departure that same day for her Palestinian home; but she never reached it. Her disappointments, sufferings and trials were too heavy to bear. She died on the road—no doubt of a broken heart, and her exiled

brother brought an unsightly coffin only to Jerusalem, where he, too, shortly died, unknown and unwept, both finding a resting-place in the tombs of their Maccabean ancestors.

Naturally, the report which I made to the monarch was colored in my favor, raising me in his opinion and esteem. I exhibited myself as a martyr to the ferocity of the victim who was sacrificed to the pride and prejudice of his subjects. As soon as the sad ending of the love affair became publicly known, Titus was lauded to the very skies. Henceforth he appeared entirely changed in character and disposition. From a profligate, careless spendthrift, and an easy-going, wilful and obstinate despot, he now became, to the admiration of the world, a thoughtful, earnest and patriotic ruler and statesman; concerned exclusively with the welfare of his realm, constantly engaged in deeds of benevolence and acts of munificent generosity. And she, the Jewess who had thus influenced and moulded his coarse nature, who had transformed the very grossness and brutality of his being—abandoned, banished and dead, a very epitome of her race as it was in the past, and as it shall become, by my agency, in the future. True, often when I came into the young emperor's presence, having been appointed a confidential adviser, I found him groaning and in tears. The excruciating pangs which he in his remorse must have suffered in the solitude of his apparently never-ceasing anguish, made his private life an eating cancer on his heart and soul. There is a Jewish legend concerning him that perhaps fully illustrates his terrible mental condition. It says that shortly after the beginning of his reign a gnat found its way into his brain, on which it fed until it grew in proportions to the size of a dove, and,

consuming that organ, killed him. Alas! this destructive insect is but a symbol of the bitter reproaches of his conscience, as I ween, which tormented him awake by day and asleep by night. Never was wronged woman more completely and tragically avenged than was this Berenice, in the silent but ever-living repentance of her betrayer, the emperor Titus.

PHANTASMAGORIA VI.

THE RAPE OF THE TABLETS.

In vain had I tried all this time to find out what had become of and where were stored the holy vessels from the temple of Jerusalem. Most of the other booty brought back from the Eastern war had been deposited in the public museums. Searching among these, not a single one of the Jewish treasures could I discover. Especially concerned was I about the Sinaitic Decalogue. At last I learned that Josephus, who now greatly rose in favor with the emperor, had declared these tablets endowed with certain mystic powers by the great God of the Hebrews, Jahveh. They had therefore been made objects of utmost care by the superstitious monarch. Kept in some sacred hiding-place at the palace, they were guarded by soldiers day and night. During my wanderings through the extensive and magnificent halls, I discovered an apartment, entirely constructed of iron and flint-rock. At the entrance to this two soldiers paced up and down continually. I suspected that here was the receptacle of the objects of my anxious search. How to find means to gain admittance to the well-secured and constantly-watched premises was now

my next concern. I saw no other way than to make friends with the men who were placed in charge of the apartment. I soon learned that the household troops exclusively had been commissioned for this duty. Alternately every six hours the guards were changed. I commenced leisurely to associate with the officers. They easily fell into my snares. Soon I knew every man of the corps, and by patient and persevering observation was enabled to find the rotation in which they were placed on duty. I singled out one couple, apparently more good-natured than the rest, and became very friendly with them. One afternoon, while they were guarding the place, their attention being diverted by a grotesque procession passing the palace, an affair which I had at my expense previously provided for this very purpose, I succeeded in making a hasty but efficient impression in wax of the huge lock, a clumsy but ingenious contrivance working bolts with a set of pins, by which they held the portals to the crypt. From this impression one of the best experts in the city made a key, which I determined to try on the lock at the first opportunity. I found out that my two boon companions, in whom I had created an insatiate appetite for my drink, were the guards from midnight to morning between the 21st and 22d of August. How impatiently I waited for that night! It came at last. In the darkness I visited my friends, and found them but too ready to be sociable. I had brought with me a large jug, one of those glazed, light terra-cotta specimens for which the Roman potters were so famous. Their greedy eyes spoke of the impatience to have it opened for a taste of its contents. With ever-renewed gulps from the tempting vessel, there was nothing under heaven which they were not eager to pledge. Amidst

the most ridiculous antics and gestures they became maudlin drunk. Yet I continued to ply them with the stuff until they fell away unconscious. All was now safe. Cautiously I approached the crypt. Trembling and with some misgivings I inserted the key in the lock. Would it fit? I turned it and heard the bolts move in the sockets, gave one pull and the door stood open. I entered and glanced around. By the dim light I espied the temple treasures, and among them my long-wished-for prize, and lifted this from its resting-place. It was much heavier than I had calculated; but nothing daunted, I took it in my arms, and locking the doors behind me, soon reached the dark street. Wrapping my mantle around the tablets, I got away in safety.

I stored the prize thus stolen into a war chariot held ready for this purpose, and started in haste for the place which I had previously selected for its burial. Through the Campagna, past towns and hamlets, never resting, until at last I reached the foot of Mount Vesuvius. Then I lifted my burden and climbed up to the raging crater. Here I arrived at the next midnight. I braced myself for the last effort, and hurled the hated thing into a seething, boiling grave. With an awful curse I exclaimed: "May ye lie there forgotten until the yawn of the last day of this globe shall open your caldron doors!" A thrill of joy passed through me as I danced in glee where I stood. The moon, struggling with the thick, dark clouds, showed her face. As I looked scornfully and laughingly upward, suddenly the ground under my feet commenced to sway and heave. The hills surrounding the neighborhood began to rise and fall as if moved by some supernatural giant-power. The whole universe seemed in frenzied commotion. A lurid col-

umn of fire and pillars of ashes burst from the crater and swept the horizon. The most awful lightning, and the deafening, screeching, howling, incessant roll of thunder followed. An avalanche of red-hot globular monsters exploded like fulminated flames with the roar and crash of a thousand cataracts, while repeated shocks twisted and turned the earth beneath my feet. Then all became still for an instant, and to my horror I beheld rise from the depths of the volcano, higher and higher, the buried tablets, enveloped in the most gloriously brilliant light. As if borne by the scorching hot air, they gradually lifted themselves until they actually stood perpendicularly upright. Remaining in this position for a moment, which seemed to me eternity, with a force which threw me prostrate near the verge of the boiling orifice, they exploded in mid-air like a brilliant meteor, and were shattered into millions of atoms, flying far out into incalculable distances to all quarters of the globe, borne by the hurricane which now ensued, to all lands and countries. I fled like a madman, never halting till I reached Rome. I found that I had been preceded by a mounted messenger, who bore the awful tidings of the eruption of Vesuvius and the destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum. The country people from all directions were rushing through the streets, looking more like ghosts than human beings. They had been terrified by the harrowing convulsions of the earth, which were felt even in Rome and still continued at irregular intervals. The uncertainty of the extent of the terrible destruction, and the continual incoming reports from the scenes of the unparalleled disaster, increased greatly the ever-spreading consternation. It was then and there that the elder Pliny, one of the most celebrated authors of this era, in his attempt to bring

relief from his ship to the stricken people, perished in his efforts. Weeks passed before the awed and superstitious inhabitants, native and foreign, from the country and city, were pacified and fell back into their ordinary course of life. During this catastrophe the emperor distinguished himself majestically. He was everywhere. Reassuring the people with kind and encouraging words, his replete treasury was opened to better the condition of the poor and suffering as never had been done before, so that many declared the terrible disaster had come as a blessing in disguise. The first stunning excitement in the capital having somewhat subsided, Titus, with his train, departed for the stricken district, sheltering those who had fled in dismay to the mountains, caring for the sick and destitute and having the uncounted dead decently buried. Often, in danger of his own life, passing through the yet smoking debris and scoria, he seemed inexhaustible in resource and strength. Ameliorating the pitiful condition of the helpless and despairing, encouraging here, rousing there, until at last some semblance of order out of the terrible chaos was established. The urgent appeals of the senate made now his return to Rome imperative. I had followed him in his journeys, and was often astonished at the genuine valor and boundless benevolence of this man, who thus proved his indisputable claim to the glorious title given him by his subjects.

PHANTASMAGORIA VII.

PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY.

One of the chief causes actuating the immediate return of Titus to Rome was a message sent by the authorities, the contents of which conveyed

tidings of great importance to the state. A new secret society had been discovered among the Palestinian captives, calling themselves the "Ebonites"—"the Paupers," from the fact that they permitted none of their members to possess worldly goods. On entering the order, whatever was owned by a member was surrendered to the common fund, from which sustenance, habiliments and shelter were provided for all. Seven commissioners, called "Presbyters," elected by the community for this purpose, were charged with this duty. The simplest and plainest of everything was provided, and all differences between poor and rich disappeared in this strange fraternity. In their religion they adhered strictly to the Mosaic law, with the addition of accepting "Jesus of Nazareth" as their ideal Messiah, who had come into this world like Moses of old to redeem mankind from the bondage of material and spiritual slavery. Their creed was "One God, One law, and One humanity." They lived a simple, unostentatious life, praying often and fervently, singing psalms, and avowing themselves loyal subjects to any government under which they lived. At meal-times they assembled together, pronounced the blessing over the wine, all drank from the same cup, broke the bread in memorial of their Saviour's last hour, and men and women indiscriminately kissed one another as a sign of their fraternal union.

They believed that some of their members were specially chosen by superior spirituality, intrusted with the office of dispensing baptism to newly accepted members, and to the older ones at stated seasons. Often these select ones in their enthusiasm prophesied of the early coming of the kingdom of God. They did wonders in the healing of the sick, and proclaimed themselves endowed

with the Holy Spirit. These few chosen acted as spiritual guides, and were called "Deacons." The early restoration of the Hebrew government and the rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem in all its former glory and lustre formed the acme of their religious expectations, to be fulfilled by the ecclesiastical influence of their adored Messiah, who had come and died to accomplish this Divine purpose. As they observed the Seventh-day Sabbath, the Abrahamitic rite, the biblical feasts, and the laws concerning the clean and unclean meats, inclusive of all other Mosaic institutions, they were looked upon by their Jewish compatriots as co-religionists, and were regarded as such by the Gentiles. During the late fearful casualty many Gentiles died of abject terror and prostrating apprehensions, others went stark mad; but fortitude, resignation and quiet distinguished these early Christians, openly declaring trust in their God, who, though angry with the wickedness and sins of the world, would protect and shield His own. The chief management of the association was entrusted to a venerable patriarch, an adherent to and a follower of the apostle James surnamed "the Lesser." The motto of James was the password of his already widely disseminated gospel, by which he, in contradistinction to all other of the disciples, stands out most prominently—the more so for being own brother of Him who died on the cross as a martyr at the hands of Pontius Pilatus, for openly declaring himself "King of the Jews." This password, now so strenuously enacted by the Roman patriarch, consisted in the principle of "Deeds, not Creeds," or, as expressed in the gospel text, "Prove yourselves Doers of the word, and not Hearers only."

Now, the equanimity and serenity of this band

of captives during the harrowing hours of wild commotion presented itself so conspicuously to the disorganized and scared crowd of Gentiles, that they flocked by the thousands to the doors of the foreigners and pitifully pleaded to be accepted as proselytes to the new religion of Judeo-Christians. This move threatened to decimate the worship of Jupiter and the hosts of deities, whose priests and multifarious servants lived entirely from the sacrifices and pious gifts brought by the multitudes of the Pagans. Bitter and clamorous complaints had been made by the united hierarchy of the heathens, representing that in the revolution against and disrespect for the gods the greatest danger threatened the state—partly from the celestial anger which would surely and fatally avenge the unprecedented heresy, partly by the political and social disaffection of the plebeians, who, by dint of their enormous numbers, might in their intoxicated enthusiasm overthrow the entire order of civil affairs. After lengthy consultations, two of the most influential and best-informed senators were therefore deputed as ambassadors to the absent emperor, to inform him of the impending crisis, and prevail upon the all-trusted monarch to return without delay to the capital, and forthwith suppress the as yet incipient revolution.

On our way homeward he imparted to me the causes of the newly arisen emergency, asking my judgment as to the proper means of mastering the certainly difficult situation. I knew the secret temper of his feelings concerning his Hebrew captives, emanating from the never-dying love he held for the absent Berenice, which had grown and increased in strength until it became a kind of exalted Platonic idealism, permeating every trait of his lately developed character. I felt that advice of

destructive despotism was out of the question. This was the more impossible, as interfering with the religious affairs of so many divergent nations lately conquered was not the policy of the Romans. After mature and deep reflection we came to the conclusion that the old Pharaonic plan of cunning was the most advisable. Foremost, it became necessary to obtain correct information as to their secret doings. For this purpose I proposed becoming a member of their society, which was not a difficult task, being known among all the captives as belonging to the Semites. When once among them, we could bide our time for devising necessary schemes for neutralizing any mischief which they might contemplate. I, however, advocated the immediate putting into effect of two measures: The first one was to levy a small per capita tax on every believer in Mosaism, with a proviso of one much larger for every Gentile proselyte who joined that faith. The sums thus raised were to be distributed among the different temples, in order to quiet the clamor of the caviling priests. The second and more important one consisted in effecting, if possible, a total separation of the old and new Jewish sects, and then playing off one against the other on the old principle, *divide et impera*. Titus highly approved and lauded the wisdom of my views, and immediately on our arrival home issued the decree of the "Jew tax," and authorized me to proceed at the earliest and most convenient time to the execution of the second part of my proposal.

I found no difficulty in passing the ordeals by which I became a full-fledged member on the rolls of the sacred conclave, and soon, with the usual zeal of new converts and my well-known high standing at court, succeeded in attaining to the front rank in their midst. Considered then as a

very great acquisition, I was further looked upon as a God-send in the hour of their new trials. Impenituous as they were, the hateful demand made upon them by the new ordinance became a loathed oppression, and I was besought to use my great influence with the authorities and have the mandate repealed. Loud was the joy, and increased the strong hold I had already on their confidence, when I soon brought the news that our gracious Caesar, though unable to recall the late law, would, out of his own coffers, defray the sums necessary to liquidate the tax as far as it concerned my new Jewish friends.

At this time an event transpired which accomplished my second great purpose, totally and forever severing the connection—racial, national and religious—between Jew and Christian, thereby laying the foundation of all the future developments which have proved so fatal and sore to both sides, but especially the proud, unbending, yet ever-surviving children of Israel. There came to the suburbs of the city—no one could tell whence—a stranger, making his home with one of the many Pariah families who dwelt there in poverty and abandon. The paterfamilias, who was known by the name of “Manilus the Unterrified,” was one of those rough, picturesque lazzaroni who live by begging, stealing or robbery, never having indulged in the luxury of an honest day’s work. Priscilla, his wife, a captive from the British Isles, in remarkable contrast, represented one of those peculiar young Northern beauties whose rags and squalor hide a countenance and character to have made her a ravishing model for any master artist from which to paint an inspired conception of an Ariadne or Helen. Petite in stature and delicate in form; glowing with health and youth, her com-

plexion was of that peculiar transparent color, suffused with the tints of roses, which lends such a magnetic charm to this type of females. With a wild wealth of curly hair, golden brown; the Grecian profile, so rare in this part of the continent; forehead and finely chiseled nose, forming almost a straight line; unusually long eyelashes, under which, as if to make the contrast complete, glistened the most sad, liquid, violet-blue orbs that ever rivaled the deep azure of the Italian sky—how even this brute, her husband, could find the heart, when coming home at eve in besotted condition, to deal blows and kicks upon so inoffensive a creature, often while nursing and holding that cherub-like girl-baby to her breast, a miniature copy of the patient and cruelly suffering maternal parent, is inexplicable, except on the theory that devil and angel often must consort. One day towards night-fall he came home in a quarrelsome mood. Without provocation he raised his cowardly arm for a chance blow which might either have killed or disfigured her for life. The beastly stroke was arrested by a hand, holding the assailant's arm as if in a vise. The surprised coward drew himself up to his full height, and seeing that he who held him was a stranger, foaming at his mouth from sheer wrath, he drew a glistening stiletto from his breast with his free hand and made a vicious lunge at the intruder. To his surprise and dismay, that arm was also caught by a grip which made any further motion impossible. No matter how he struggled, wriggled and tried to get away from his unexpected opponent, he was held by an irresistible power, which brought him panting and trembling upon his knees. Then the stranger cast his piercing eyes upon the quivering villain and spoke: "Too long hast thou tried the

patience of Heaven in the treatment of this thy wife and child! Now repent! Repeat the words of prayer after me which I shall now command, or this instant shalt thou die!" The woman, too, had fallen on her knees. The semi-darkness, which hid the group in the dismal room, seemed illuminated suddenly by a strange influx of rays which the setting sun shed from the carminated horizon. Still holding the subdued bandit in his grasp, the defender of the wife continued: "I am one of the disciples of Christ,—Him who has come into this world to save the sinner and protect the weak against the strong. Now let us pray!"

Then in tones clear as a silver bell, he spoke these grand, eloquent, sublime yet simple words: "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen."

Having finished, he relinquished the hold on the arms of his conquered antagonist. Large tears rolled over the now metamorphosed features of Manilus, changed from the brutal to an almost saint-like expression. The woman and child were in his arms. Such was the heroic work of the lately elected Bishop Cecil Romanus, the third successor of Peter the Apostle among the Gentiles. By strange persuasive eloquence, piety, love and sympathy which this high priest of the new Church exercised, accompanied by an earnest zeal and enthusiasm, in a very short time, from hitherto small and insignificant numbers, a powerful and numerous congregation of Heathen-Christians sprang into active life. They differed diametrically

from their Jewish-Christian brethren, especially in declaring that the covenant of the old dispensation with the coming of the Messiah was abolished; that all the Mosaic ceremonials were no longer in force—no longer obligatory on the children of man, whose safety and salvation rested exclusively in their Belief in the Trinity of the Godhead, and not in their works.

Two such divergent sects, antagonizing as they soon must one another, and both to the parent-religion, the Jews, from which they sprang, I was satisfied would so press against themselves that they could not live in peace together. On my making report to the Emperor of the state of affairs concerning these things, we agreed that no immediate steps by the government were required to hold all three factions in check; they would, in the combat which must ensue shortly among their own ranks, neutralize any danger to the state or the altars of the gods. But while our prognostication proved true for the present, ultimately, as their history will demonstrate, the Roman temples and the Ebionite synagogues were swallowed up entirely by the rapidly-spreading Catholic-Christians. The stiff-necked, never-subduable Jews, quite contrary to my plans and fondest expectations, however, kept themselves isolated; they survived, a remnant of patience and endurance, to live on through the coming ages.

PHANTASMAGORIA VIII.

PESTILENCE AND FIRE IN ROME.

No one except an eye-witness could even approximately measure the depth of degradation and infamy to which the Gentile population of the

“mistress of the world” had fallen. From the lowest to the highest circles, depravity, lust and rapine reigned supreme throughout the arteries of this immense colossus of accumulated nationalities and races, who, to the existing stock of native wickedness, brought each a plentiful supply of the abnormal vices of their own countries. Under the authority and as the rites of their several religions they practised the most abhorrent vices. Every carnal indulgence which an unlicensed imagination could conjure up from the depths of infamy; every gourmandine appetite that the most ingenious invention of a depraved taste might gratify; every stimulating luxury that might tickle the lascivious temper of the idle and over-wealthy patricians—in shuddering contrast with the hunger, squalor and ferocious disposition of the unkempt plebeians, produced a state of affairs in this strangely mixed body-politic which in a very short period culminated in its terrible crash and final downfall. Rome, who in her wanton power had written with fire and sword the fiat upon the records of a thousand perished empires, sank by her own innate human weakness and crimes.

One of the worst features in the catalogue of this nation’s sins was the necessity of providing, at public expense, those debasing, sanguinary games and pastimes of the arena, those gladiatorial combats between men and beasts which formed the all-engrossing diversion of the high and low. Such a feast of unspeakably revolting barbarity, decked with all the pomp and paraphernalia of outside show, took place at the opening of the Coliseum, the vastest structure of its kind ever erected by human hands, every stone of which was cemented by the blood and tears of the Hebrew captives who had completed it in the beginning of the year 80 A. D.

The immense and unique edifice covered five acres of ground, and had, besides the spacious imperial and government boxes, and the "sequestræ" for the gladiators and beasts, a seating capacity of 80,000 spectators. To celebrate worthily its inaugural, prior to throwing it open for the public use, three days of unprecedented arena festivities had been provided, irrespective of expense and labor. The most extensive preparations had been made under the direction of Titus himself, for the grandest displays ever witnessed by even so fastidious a people as the pampered Romans.

The first day was set aside for fights and the combats between the ferocious brutes of the national museum. Early dawn saw the eager crowds, amidst the unceasing strains of martial music, wending their way towards the many-colored, draped, bannered and festooned auditorium, where walls, posts and pillars glistened and glinted with frescoes, portraits, battle-scenes and landscapes. Promptly at noon, jubilant shouts of the populace within and without announced the arrival of the sovereign, his train and followers. The stupendous audience stood on their feet, shouting themselves hoarse with acclamations of joy and excitement. As soon as he had reached the magnificent throne provided for him on the elevated dais, I stepped forth from the alcove where I had awaited his coming, and kneeling, presented the golden key, studded with diamonds, sapphires and emeralds, in token of having accomplished the greatest architectural work of this or any previous age. He graciously and smilingly accepted the gift. Amid the tumultuous acclamations from the auditorium, the orator and poet of the day now stepped forth. With a long harangue in prose and verse, which could not be understood six feet from

where he sec-sawed with wild and grotesque gestures, he at last concluded, to the endless relief of all, gathered the folds of his purple toga, and sat down, no doubt the most self-satisfied mortal on earth. The bugles now gave the signals for the real opening of this day's sport. Then the doors of the cells where the ravenous beasts had been hungering for days, were opened in rotation as they were wanted, to tear each other to pieces, or to exercise their murderous strength upon some hapless human victims, who had been doomed to the horrible fate of encountering the teeth and claws of the bears, lions, tigers and panthers. It is not my purpose to describe in detail these barbarous pastimes, in which the coarse Roman taste found such delight, amusement and enthusiasm; nor will I dilate upon the second day's proceedings, consisting of the races on foot, horseback and chariots. Even the third day, with its gladiatorial and athletic exercises, in their various forms and inhumanities, engages my attention only so far as concerns the very last act in this dramatic folly. It brings before us the moment near sunset, when the last herald, with a long call from his silver trumpet, demands attention, proclaiming in the name of all the gods the challenge to the Infidels, the Gnostics, the Christians and the Jews, to produce and bring forth a champion for their cause against the Gentile representative, who now was ready to enter the field in defense of the sacred rights of Polytheism. Then he withdrew; but scarcely had he disappeared when there stepped forward a monstrous fellow, a very giant in all proportions. His large, round head, shorn of hair, sat square upon the ponderous neck, growing from a chest as broad and powerful as that of a lion. His bare arms displayed muscles like cords. The whole form rested

upon the most massive legs and feet. Barely had he taken position in the centre of the arena, when there sprang from the audience Manilus, the late convert to Christianity. With a voice that rang through the whole assembly he cried out:

“Woe to Rome the wicked!—Woe to the heathens and the sinners!—Woe to the foes of Jehovah and His anointed Messiah!”

By this time he had reached near the spot where his imposing adversary had taken position. Then he exclaimed in stentorian tones:

“Thou, like Goliah of the Philistines, comest to me with thy strength and thy boasts! but I come in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies which thou hast defied! This day will the Lord deliver thee into my hand; and I will smite thee, and take thy head from off thee; and I will give the carcasses of the armies of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the world may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the Lord saveth not with spear or sword, for the battle is the Lord’s and He will give you into our hands.”

No one could help but compare the appearance of the antagonistic parties. The new-comer looked like a dwarf alongside of his adversary. Suddenly they threw themselves in fury one upon the other. Everybody thought that surely in the fierce encounter the big one would at the very first effort have crushed his insignificant-looking adversary. But with a subtlety entirely unexpected the Christian eluded the terrible weight that was to fell him, and turning quickly, with a powerful rush upon the back of his enemy, the giant was brought with a crash to the ground.

Then, like a streak of lightning, Manilus,

drawing a large knife from his bosom, jumped upon the prostrate form, and with repeated blows left the fallen colossus dead at his feet.

Then ensued a scene of tumult, uproar and consternation, accompanied by cries of frenzy and despair. Had it not been for the high barriers and the strong guards, the masses would have leaped to where this singular combat was enacted, and no doubt have torn the victor to pieces. But an occurrence took place at this instant which made unnecessary any further efforts in this direction. A well-directed lance thrown by one of the guards smote the conqueror in his breast, and with the repeated cry, "Woe to Rome!—Woe to the heathens!—Woe to the sinners!—Woe to the foes of Jehovah and his anointed Messiah!" Manilus sank expiring upon the dead body of his huge challenger.

Now the portals that led to the inner circle of the combatants were thrown open, and the disappointed, chagrined and humiliated spectators rushed in to where the corpses of the two gladiators lay. Those who pushed forward noticed with surprise that both bodies were covered from head to foot with red, angry-looking pustules and spots, emitting a peculiar odor which could not possibly be ascribed to any putrefaction, since death had barely set in. The attention of a medical man being called to this strange phenomenon, he presently cried out: "The Pestilence!—the Pestilence! Fly, people, for your lives! let none come near! let none approach or touch!" As the dismayed multitude fled in every direction, many heard the plaintive voice of a beautiful woman with a babe on her arm, who stood near the entrance of the door, sounding like the lament of doom—"Woe to Rome!—Woe to the heathens!—Woe to the foes of Jehovah and His anointed Messiah!"

This was the now widowed Priscilla and her orphaned daughter.

By the next day the horrible disease made its appearance in several quarters of the city, the sanitary condition of which was in an awful state. True, where the Patricians had their palaces and mansions on the broad and magnificent avenues and streets, all was scrupulously clean and bright. But the byways and alleys, their "angi-portus," inclusive of almost all that lay in the suburbs and around the river Tiber, were like so many sinks and cesspools of filth and dirt. The terribly contagious germs of the awful "Black Death" had, no doubt, been brought here and introduced by some of the Asiatic prisoners of war, who still continued to come, and who had been only lately brought in; its fatal harvest becoming quickly and malignantly ripe. So indifferent had the selfish people become to the affairs of a next-door neighbor, or even an inmate of their own dwellings, that the news of the first victims of the dread disease passed by unheeded and unnoticed. But when the killing invader spread its presence, grinning hither and thither with a convulsive omnipresence; when the fearful clutch no longer fastened alone on the poor and vulgar, but rushed upon the aristocracy also, deluded by the vain security that wealth was proof against contagion; when the bloated, festering corpses suddenly multiplied among the opulent and startled nobility, then the authorities, with an unparalleled activity, roused themselves to the most stringent and sweeping measures for the relief of the stricken inhabitants and the arrest of further incursions of the malignant malady.

Vain were the efforts of frail humanity against the destructive agency of nature, once let loose upon its calamitous career. All precautionary

efforts became futile against the mad onslaught of the pestilence. Yellow flags were ordered hoisted from every dwelling where entered the epidemic. In a few days every street looked as if curtained with these sombre emblems of terror; but soon there were neither hands to display such nor material from which to make them. The dead could no longer be decently buried. Lamentations and tears ceased; callousness and indifference took the place of sympathy and benevolence. Medical science stood appalled and helpless. Pagan religion, in prosperity so boastful, now stood mute and wan, her ministers fleeing to safe distances, or were engulfed in the common lot, perishing by the scores.

Whoever could get away from the carnival of destruction went precipitately—often to perish at a little distance, after having but started. In the ever-increasing exodus, many carried with them the already distinguishable symptoms of the certain contagion.

Soon parents forsook their children, husbands their wives; all the bonds of love, devotion, friendship, and interests of any nature, ceased to exist. Houses became empty; the marts and stores stood forsaken and deserted, for there was no one to sell or to buy.

Large numbers of those who had escaped the pestilence became mad with fear and apprehension, and ran through the streets wildly gesticulating and shouting. The military, who suffered no less than the civilians, had to be commissioned for burial at night of the ever-swelling thousands of festering victims. Graves could no longer be dug, but bodies were thrown into the river. The very atmosphere became thick and loathsome, and it seemed as if the process of extermination would

never cease until the last subject for its hold had been stricken. These were mournful and yet glorious days for Titus. Day after day, night after night, in unceasing vigils, he exerted all his power and strength to combat the calamity. With superhuman efforts he tried to rally the people, help the needy, console the despairing, encourage the weak, grapple with the destroyer, restore order, re-establish law and security. Invulnerable himself to the disease, while coming in contact with its lowest and most malignant types, I verily believe he would have gladly laid down his life to stay its ravages.

Wonderful to say, the Jews and Ebionites enjoyed to a large extent great immunity from the havoc of the pestilence. No doubt their strict adherence to the Mosaic dietary laws, the enforcement of cleanliness, purity and temperance as religious rites, their abstinence from the forbidden meat of swine; then the scrupulous care of the sick, and the conscientious attention paid by special appointed committees for the immediate burial of any dead; the never-to-be-extinguished sympathetic "helping hand," which, from motives of charitable disposition, is ever and under all circumstances extended to a needy or suffering Hebrew; their forced absence from the crowds, they not being permitted to attend the public shows;—all these reasons may well account for the phenomenal freedom from danger in their camps. Since the completion of the Coliseum they had been permitted rest and recuperation from physical exertion. Their ranks had been swelled by the addition of visitors from the Holy Land, whence, by permission of the governor, they came in search of their kin-people, bringing such relief as money and nursing would provide. Long before the destruction of Jerusalem there had been a prosperous and highly respected colony of these

peculiar people in Rome ; and while they apparently kept aloof from their unfortunate brethren, yet under the leadership of Josephus—to his credit it must be said—their good offices and powerful help in a quiet and unostentatious way were extended to many. The Christians, followers of Peter, suffered to even a less extent. Largely drawn from the rank and file of the Gentiles, they continued, irrespective of the new creed, their associations with former friends ; and while openly exposed to the epidemic, yet they strove like angels of mercy in the lowest huts and dens against the raging calamity. Priscilla especially, with her beautiful babe always near, served them as an example. Forgetful of risk and danger, she could be seen attending the stricken ones, devoted and loving as only an enthusiastically inspired woman may, laboring with relentless efforts at all hours of day and night. Her sweet smiles, her reassuring words, her kind works, even to the meanest, acted like soothing and powerful medicaments, and often succeeded in snatching some poor friendless being from the very jaws of the destroyer. To the astonishment of her acquaintances and the people with whom she came in contact, she seemed to bear a charmed life, remaining rosy, fresh, and active. Once the Emperor met her engaged in those self-imposed holy duties, and on being told who and what she was, in the presence of all his retinue, kissed the little woman on her forehead, and caused immediately large sums and voluntary helpers to be placed at her disposal. O the blessings and the tears that were showered upon the Nazarenes with their giant hearts ! No wonder that such converts drew fresh disciples to the baptismal font of the ever-spreading new faith. Still the number of the dead increased with fearful rapidity ; they already exceeded one hundred thousand. At this time, when

every gate of the fortifications surrounding the seven hills had been thrown open, and no surveillance was kept over the departing fugitives, large numbers of the Palestinian captives mingled with the fleeing, and all who could, got away, there being no one to hinder or gainsay their leaving. In fact, most people who had anything to do with them were glad to get rid of the encumbrance. After a short period the Jew-quarter was almost entirely emptied. My birds had flown, and in spite of every exertion which I then could make I failed to find their destination. All I did ascertain was, they did not return to their fatherland, but moved on further Westward.

When the mortuary misery had reached its greatest bounds, one of the most trusted medical counselors suggested the advisability of purifying the contaminated atmosphere, by building huge fires all over the city and its precincts. This was put into immediate execution. Either that the remedy was really efficacious, or that the energy and attention of the masses were diverted from the source of danger and directed to some absorbing occupation, by which they attained new hope and raised a spark of latent vitality, the measure acted like a charm. The burial rates diminished, convalescent patients appeared on the highways and byways, feasting their eyes on the columns of flame and smoke everywhere rising skywards and causing the landscape to appear like a sea of fire.

As if the cup of appalling woe was to be drained to the dregs by the doomed capital, on the third day of these fire-displays, towards evening, the caloric heat generated in one of the central quarters became so intense that it ignited a wooden structure in the middle of the block of residences. The flames spread with fearful rapidity, defying all

efforts to stay the conflagration. At midnight the leaping tongues of the merciless fiend lit up the heavens from a thousand structures; the cries and shrieks from the now houseless people mingled with the roar and the noise of the ever-spreading flames and the crash and thunder of the falling buildings. For three days it seemed as if chaos were come again. It was difficult to reach the water of the river; it was still more difficult to get people to bring it. Only the merest apologies of organized help existed. It appeared as if all the enraged elements had combined and were let loose upon doomed Rome.

On the fourth day the whole district was consumed, and the very want of further inflammable material stayed at last the terrible calamity. But oh what a sight! what an experience! Uncounted people, just out of the jaws of the pestilence, now hungry, naked, unsheltered and unprovided! Many envied the fate of those who had been thrown in the charnel-heaps or who were committed to the Tiber, to float down as food for the fishes of the Adriatic. Again the hard-trying Emperor came to the rescue. Every available tent of the military was erected near the walls of the city, for the shelter of his desolate subjects. A fleet with provisions from Arabia opportunely arrived that day at the landings, and the Emperor from his own exchequer purchased the food and had rations issued to the famishing. No one was allowed to suffer if it could be helped. He sent word to those who had lost their all to keep good courage; that he would at his own expense re-erect every building demolished, and from personal resources make good every loss sustained. In proof of the truth of his promises a public committee was at once appointed by him, and millions upon millions of gold placed at their disposal for use and distribution.

Wretched Emperor! he should never see the realization and accomplishment of these, his unprecedented humanitarian designs.

Exhausted by the heartrending trials which beset his afflicted subjects during the short term of his auspicious reign, he was assailed by burning fever, and hoping to find rest and restoration at the quiet retreat of his villa in the Campagna—the same place where his father Vespasian, before him, had spent the last days of a troubled life—he repaired thither. Addicted passionately to the use of the bath, against the advice of his medical men, he greatly increased the danger of his malady, when, by counsel of his wily brother, he at last had resort to an immersion in a tub of snow. He expired in great agony on the 13th day of September, 81 A. D., worshipped by a weeping people and exalted in history as one of the grandest sovereigns of his realm. But the picture and fate of poor, forsaken Berenice are said to have haunted him to the last.

PHANTASMAGORIA IX.

A PSEUDO-MOSES.

My mission in Rome was ended. The successor to the throne, Domitian, younger and only brother of Titus, was in every point of character the opposite of his predecessor. Coarse and mean in disposition, crafty and vulgar by nature, licentious and tyrannical, selfish and low, he belonged to those abnormalities of human nature who appear from time to time, a curse of their race.

Distrustful and jealous, when he saw me in favor with his father and brother he had no friendship for me. It was time, too, that I should look after

and trace my escaped Jewish adversaries and learn what had become of the fugitives. From information obtained without difficulty, I persuaded myself that the miserable remnant left in Palestine had ceased to be a factor in the future of the Hebrews.

The backbone of their nationality seemed to be broken forever. If, in their desperation and blind fury, under the heels of their oppressing foreign governors, they undertook to throw off the yoke of slavery, they became utterly impotent, and even more aggravating to their enemies. This was notably the case in a widespread revolt under "Bar Chochba," in the city of Betar, which cost the lives of nearly a half million Jews, without achieving any results.

The sages and teachers frittered their time away with disputations among themselves, and in the collection of the trite and effete traditions of their ancestors, gathering and arranging material for book-making. They boasted that already the first volumes of "Oral law decisions" were ready for publication. This proved afterward true, in the appearance of certain volumes called the "Mishnah," and in its further extension, many years later, in the wild vagaries of the "Talmud," or "Gamarah." In my short-sightedness I could see in these literary labors nothing but a useless waste of energy. Attaching to such brain-work not the first value, I considered further attention to the Palestinian portion of my Mosaic foes unnecessary. I disdained to smite a lot of caviling rabbins, with their puerile and insignificant disputes and dissertations.

Had I but intimated to the new sovereign any idea of treason attempted by the schools of Jabne and Pompedita, where the Sanhedrins wasted time in "Halacha"—law decisions—and "Agada"—legends and fables—one crushing blow from Rome would have extinguished their existence. But no;

they might argue and write to their hearts' content, if I could reach the new and powerful colonies which must have started somewhere, and which I was determined to discover in their unknown retreats. So I departed on my errand to search the continent for the fugitives from Rome.

In all my long and extensive peregrinations I never lost sight of the main task which I had set for myself. With such avowed purpose I found easy access to the potentates, the aristocracy and churchmen, all of whom were eager to introduce me to one another. This facilitated the dissemination of the intoxicating drink, with the aid of which I hoped to achieve great results. And indeed it seldom failed. The peasants and tradesmen, groaning under the weight of abject dependence and poverty; the soldiers, with their natural dissoluteness—all became easy victims of my beverage. Liquor-dispensing shops were soon found in every Cisalpine land. Here assembled all classes of the population. Quarreling, disputing and gambling, they sank to the vilest, meanest and most impoverished revelers, seeking to forget their suffering and hard-trying families at home. Here they stayed till late into the night, and often committed excesses which brought them to the prisons, or they became guilty of crimes which led them to the block of the hangman. Under such influences, in a few generations, these mobs were prepared for the outrageous work in store for them, to be continually used as blind tools by the thrones and altars. The greatest suffering was reserved for women. At all times they intuitively shrank from me, spurned my affections, had subjected my feelings to the keenest and most torturing disappointments. Now I determined, if possible, no more to be won by soft smiles and blandishments, but to be avenged upon the whole sex for

the faults of a few of its number. I could, however, as a rule, tempt no female to partake of the intoxicant. When now and then I succeeded in beguiling one into its use, she made such a disgusting, abhorrent spectacle of herself—by far more repulsive than any man—that she became a warning example to all her sisters.

For over three centuries, while the whole civilized world was re-shaped and re-moulded, I wandered from land to land, without being able to find a trace of my long-lost Hebrew captives. True, in the city of Prague and, farther northward, the town of Worms, and several places under Teutonic rule, small colonies of Israelites existed. These had, however, come here directly from Palestine, long before the destruction of Jerusalem. Though thrifty and wealthy, importing overland highly-prized Oriental products, and exporting to the East in exchange tin, jewels and gold, yet they consisted of but comparatively few families, living peaceably and sociably with their rude neighbors.

Wandering thus north, south, east and west, over the whole continent, making myself acquainted with the principalities for use hereafter, I reached at last the British Isles. These I included in the dark future which I was preparing for all countries during the now approaching Mediaeval ages. Spite the most scrutinizing search, nothing whatever could I learn of those mysteriously-disappeared Hebrews. Resting one evening near London, on the banks of the river Thames, the drunken antics of some sailors on a foreign ship, making ready for her voyage, attracted my attention.

I saw a dusky-looking traveller, with a lady leaning on his arm, step upon the plank which led to the boat. Slowly and carefully he led the way, supporting the woman in his charge. When he

was half-way up the narrow gangway, being then immediately over the tossing water, a brawny, uncouth fellow, in blind haste, running from the ship, jostled against the newcomers. The lady lost her balance and, with a piercing scream, fell into the river. It took me but a moment to rush to the brink, spring after and rescue her from an untimely death. With the aid of her companion and others who hastened to our assistance, we were soon safely on board the ship.

When the excitement caused by this sudden accident was over, I learned that in a few hours the craft would sail for the island of Crete; that the person who had lately come, and whose wife had met with the serious mishap, was the owner of the boat, now bound for her return trip home to "Megalocastron," the capital of the little state. He told me, what I had already surmised from his features and peculiar gait, that he was a Jew—chief of the different congregations living in the several Levantine towns, who had escaped from Roman rule years ago, there had colonized, and who were now prosperous and of great commercial power. He had been to England to perfect mercantile connections for himself and brethren and had been eminently successful, but for the late accident, which nearly proved so fatal to his lately wedded spouse, in whom was centred all his love and happiness. Their expressions of gratitude were oppressively profuse, and nothing would do but that I accept their hospitality and accompany them to the far-off home. Here, then, by the merest chance, I found a clue to the whereabouts of my long-searched-for truants, and it took but little persuasion for me to accept the cordial invitation. An hour later I had my effects aboard, when towards evening the anchors were lifted, and with full sails we passed

down the river into the canal towards the open sea. The narrow sphere of one of these old Phœnician boats is most conducive to confidential relations. The slow progress, the monotony of confinement on the small deck or in the coffin-like cabins; the absence of all interesting employment save the watching of the sky and water; even the meals, with their very few varying courses, and the limited company—all tend to draw the few passengers closely together, and soon each became acquainted with the past history of the others. Thus I early was in possession of the life-stories of my host and hostess. The latter especially was highly interesting to me. She proved to be of the most piquant and contradictory character and disposition. Tall and commanding in stature, a perfect type of Eastern women; face dusky, with lustrous eyes; long, black hair, broad forehead and swan-like neck; an exquisitely moulded nose, and lips upon which continually rested a sarcastic smile, she was a beauty so brilliant as to make me think of the Queen of Sheba, of whom even so wise a king as Solomon became enamoured. But what struck me most after a nearer acquaintance was her peculiar disposition: one moment sad and pensive, the next exultant and gay; this instant frowning, weeping and fretting; the very next, without cause or reason for such a change, laughing, hilarious and jovial. And all this with a mind so unbending and domineering as must make living with her for any length of time a source of aggravation and ceaseless worry. She had been married to her husband by her highly respected but poor parents, according to the fashion of the Orient, without ever before having known him. The old folks, now dead, were not Hebrews, but belonged to a numerous class of intelligent natives who had become proselytes to the covenant of Abraham. The

husband of this strange woman was one of those grand specimens of manhood, in form as well as disposition, reminding one of the patriarchs of old. With unlimited wealth, generous, highly bred and cultured, infatuated by her beauty and vivaciousness, he doted upon his queenly wife, despite her peculiarities and waywardness. But she soon hated him for his riches; hated him for his generosity; hated him for his indulgence and patience towards her; she hated him most, however, for his religion and all that belonged to it, especially for its ceremonial life, to which she must conform. She therefore made his whole existence one continued source of trouble and misery. The present journey having become necessary, notwithstanding remonstrances and urgent appeals, she insisted upon accompanying him on his travels, full of inconveniences and dangers. Arrived at his destination, she left him no rest day or night, insisting upon immediate return home; so he must hasten and overwork himself to complete the pending negotiations. At last these were finished and their departure undertaken. We have seen how, at the very start, she nearly lost her life. Now he fell sick from over-exertion and lay in the cabin, nursed almost exclusively by a servant, while she on deck in any company gave her prankish mood full sway. Far from being jealous, yet he grievously felt the conjugal neglect, and when once chiding her reproachfully for such indifference, she pounced upon him with a volley of harsh words, accusing him of shamming illness. Soon afterwards, when I had occasion to go to his couch, I found him in tears. From henceforth the symptoms of his disease became more serious and alarming, and now with equal contrariness she became frantically solicitous, and would not leave him for a moment. With her crying and lamentations she

worried everybody around her, and with bitter accusations blamed herself as the cause of his suffering. Thus passed a few dreary days. One morning it became evident that his end was nigh, and that but a few hours would elapse before his final dissolution. He called us all around him, placed a large sealed package—his last will and testament—in the hands of his wife, telling her with faint words that this document made her his sole heir, with the exception of the good ship, bequeathed to the faithful captain, who was also a pious old Hebrew. Then placing his wife in my charge, and breathing the last words of an expiring Israelite, his struggles were over—he was dead!

The weather being excessively warm, it was impossible to keep the body, so it was wrapped in a winding-sheet of bissus. We buried the corpse that same evening in the bosom of the Mediterranean, where we now were on our way homeward. Nothing conceivable to my mind is more sad and mournful than such a burial at sea; and this seemed especially so. The gray-haired captain, as he assisted in letting the body down, mumbled over it a few Hebrew words of prayer. He shook like one in a fever, and big tears rolled down his swarthy face. Miranda, the wife, like one crazed, swayed to and fro, tore her hair, smote her bosom and made attempts to throw herself after the corpse into the high-tossing waves. I caught her and she fell fainting into my arms. We carried her limp and seemingly lifeless to the cabin. Here, however, she recovered very soon. Lying motionless on a couch, staring into vacancy, we thought it best to leave her with her sorrow in the care of an old nurse, a faithful attendant during this journey.

When a few hours later I came back to console her, what was my surprise to find the widow sitting

up, so deeply engrossed in reading the contents of the now open and unsealed package, that at first she had not even noticed my entrance. "Mine—all mine!" she exclaimed in a jubilant tone. "Money almost uncounted, treasures without end!—all mine without let or hindrance, with no one to domineer, none to grudge or direct." Handing me a packet, she said: "Take this and see if it is of any use to you, for it is of none to me. You will find therein the result of this voyage, a full account of our people at home and their new connections with the merchants and traders of Britain." Among this bundle of documents I indeed afterwards found all those things for which I was so fervently searching, fully set forth. I found the numbers and wealth of the people who had been divided into several congregations, or "Kehilahs," as they called them; a short but comprehensive history of the settlements since their departure from Rome; their hopes and aspirations at home and abroad; and finally, the conception, execution and results of this mission by their chief, "the Parnass," as he was titled in these writings. Nothing more precious could have been bestowed upon me! From these documents I also learned of a strange delusion with which these Hebrews were filled, concerning the early coming of a personal Messiah who would lead them back to Palestine and restore the temple in Jerusalem, as promised them by the ancient prophets. So wild were their imaginings in this respect that their authorities felt themselves constrained to send to one of the leading members of the Sanhedrin of Persia, the renowned and princely Rabbi Ashi; the celebrated father of the Babylonian Talmud, who, with all the influence of his eloquence and authority, warned the people from entertaining and fostering such evil-boding vagaries. This

knowledge determined the line of my future policy. Upon my arrival among them I resolved to try the role of a "Pseudo-Moses," in order to entice these benighted Jews into my calamitous plots, which should lead to their utter destruction.

To return, however, to the bereft young widow. During our interview she showed her most curious nature. First it was a bitter lamentation, garnished with an abundance of tears, bewailing her apparently irretrievable loss; then she would suddenly stop and appeal to me as the savior of her life, and beg that I remain her true friend; that I must stand by her as a protector and guardian against her co-religionists, who always had disliked the not over-scrupulous convert since she became the wife of their leader. They had planned that he should marry some daughter of theirs, a girl whom she cordially hated and despised. They would make every possible effort now to get possession of the wife's inheritance, and she implicitly trusted to me, so good, so kind and generous, to espouse her cause in the hour of need. She declared that it was an act of God's providence to find a faithful and dear companion, and that there was nothing in her power and gift which she would not gladly sacrifice to reward me for the great troubles and cares which the confidential and important trust would certainly cause me. As she was speaking thus she became more and more excited, her face flushed, and the pressure of her hands, which held mine, increased with the warmth of her passionate recital. One needed, but little knowledge of human nature to divine the drift of the whole performance, and it filled me with such feelings of disgust and aversion that I loathed these advances even while she spoke. And yet I would not estrange her from me, it being patent that I must hold this woman completely in

my power, to be used as a great instrument in my future schemes.

So, promising faithful performance of everything asked of me, and speaking words of consolation and comfort to her, now that her maid entered, we parted the best of friends. Before morning I had read the documents and, guided by their contents, laid out the plan which I intended to pursue on my landing at the island of Crete. The foremost difficulty which presented itself to my mind was how to keep this woman devotedly attached to me, without revealing the intense antipathy I felt for her person. Like an inspiration it struck me that it would be best for this purpose to assume without delay my role of "Messiah," and by filling her with feelings of reverence and holy awe for my individuality, keep her at a proper distance.

When next I saw the widow she was seated under a canopy near the cabin of the boat, erected with great skill, beautifully ornamented. "Such a wonderful dream I had last night!" she excitedly broke forth upon seeing me. These people place great value on dreams. I had to take a seat close by her side. Then she began: "I saw, while asleep, my late departed husband standing as an angel before the throne of the Lord, surrounded by all the heavenly hosts, while a mighty chorus chanted, 'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the councilor from between his feet, until he cometh of Shiloh, and to him shall the nations gather.'" Then I saw you, dear friend, rise from out their midst in a giant's form, robed in celestial garments of a seer and prophet, and the whole assembly cried out as with one voice, 'It is he who has come from Shiloh! To him shall the nations gather!'"

As she concluded I rose, and throwing aside the mantle with which I had covered my inner garb,

stood before her in the identical robes she had described, and in which I had clothed myself preparatory to the announcement which I had designed to make to her in this very hour. I saw her tremble from head to foot and her face grow pale. "Who art thou," I heard her exclaim, in a quivering, startled voice, "that cometh to me like the realization of a supernatural vision?" Straightening myself up to my full height, I replied, "Be it then revealed to thee, woman—I am Moses, he who released our people once from the bondage of Egypt, now commissioned to return to earth and once again gather them and lead them back to their fathers' lost inheritance, that they may re-erect the fallen temple for the glory and worship of the Lord." At this she knelt before me and gave forth such cries of joy and amazement that every one on board of the ship came running towards us. To them she told the miraculous story of her dream and my revelation. They too, every one of them, fell on their faces, exclaiming until it echoed throughout the ship far over the waters, "Lo we have seen the Messiah! God be praised! glorified be the Lord of hosts Zabaoth!" During the remainder of the journey, which lasted another week, I was treated with such veneration, deference and distinction as amounted to worship. Three times each day we prayed together, and with implorations of fiery zeal and cant, of which I was an elocutionary master, I raised their state of mind to enthusiastic frenzy. I appointed the woman, by solemnly laying hands upon her head, as my sanctified prophetess. With similar ceremonies the aged captain was made my chief executive. The remainder of the crew and attendants were my lieutenants and body servitors. Within twenty-four hours they prepared at my command complete outfits of white garments, in which

they henceforth clothed themselves, looking like a company of spirits. An immense banner was made from white linen, fringed with gold. On the centre of this, embroidered by the skilled hands of Miranda, who had forgotten all else in her slavish devotion to me, were the pompous words: "The Messiah hath come!" This flag was hoisted on our mast, no doubt to the bewilderment and astonishment of every passing craft, quite a number of which we now met almost hourly. Other smaller ensigns of the same pattern were prepared, to be carried hereafter by each of us. The same words which adorned our banner were employed by every one on board as salutation, so that whenever one passed another they cried out, "The Messiah hath come!"

The next thing which engaged my attention was how to proceed on landing at the port of our destination. I planned that as soon as our anchor was dropped we would form a procession, and then move through the main street, which led to the synagogue, greeting every one whom we should meet with the ominous words of our holy salute.

I drilled my converts daily in this exercise, until all was arranged and understood to perfection.

At last we entered the harbor, the only one of the island. Here was a very busy day; a large crowd of people were engaged in bringing and taking away merchandise. As soon as we had dropped anchor we assembled on deck, each waving a streamer with our watchword emblazoned thereon, and shouting "The Messiah hath come!"

The strange proceedings and peculiar exclamations soon attracted a great number of people, who wondered what this all was about. We swerved neither to the right nor to the left, but with every pomp our small numbers were capable of, forthwith started in the order and manner which I had pre-

arranged. Miranda led the train ; the captain, with me, marched next, and then the balance closed up the procession. Long before we had reached the temple, report had spread throughout the city that the "Parnass ship" had returned, and of the strange proceedings by his wife and her followers, while the husband nowhere was seen. When we arrived at the steps of the edifice, after a long and slow march, all Israel was assembled to receive us. Then we mounted the platform before the portal, and here I addressed the assembly. From time to time my sentences were interrupted by my adherents with their watchword, which was soon taken up by the masses as they became first interested and then heated to boundless enthusiasm. "Chosen children of Israel, your merciful God at last has compassion on your dispersion and suffering. Like in days of old when Henoah walked before the Lord and he was no more, for 'God took him,' so He has called home in death at sea your beloved 'Parnass' and leader. But He has deputed me, the prophet Moses, from the right hand of His throne, to descend among His people and deliver them again, as of yore, from the bondage of their oppressors. So shall the words of the prophet be fulfilled which say, 'From the North shall come your Redeemer!' And as it is further written, 'Behold, I will send to you the prophet Elijah, before the great and awful day of the Lord cometh.' Recognize, then, in this young woman the anointed messenger from on High, to be with me as Aaron was when your fathers walked out, free from the land of slavery. Now go ye as your ancestors did at Mount Sinai, and obey my words : 'Sanctify the people to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their garments, which be white as mine and these, and be ye ready against the third day. For on the third day the Lord will come

down in the sight of all the people from the mountain.' (Ex. xix. 10, 11.) Now do ye this: go and pray and fast for these two days, as I and mine shall do; divest yourselves of all your sins and earthly cares—have neither worldly goods nor possessions any longer, but leave all dross to your enemies; assemble at a place near the sea, which I shall appoint, when, at my command, the waters will part and you shall walk over as on dry land. And bring there, by your special messengers, all Israel dwelling on the island, so that the people be assembled on the third day at early morning. Then shall ye see the glory of your God, 'for the Lord will fight for you, but ye shall be still!'" (Ex. xiv. 14.) Hereupon the multitude raised one simultaneous wild cry—"The Messiah hath come!—the Messiah hath come! And all the Lord hath spoken we will do and obey!"

Then I bestowed upon them the blessing of the high-priest, and called upon all to disperse and go to their homes to prepare for the awful event that was to come. But they formed themselves now into various groups. These I watched with the keenest interest. Everybody argued or was argued with, and with such animated excitement and gesticulation as only these Semitic people are capable of. Here a rabbi, with long double-pointed white beard, a skull-cap upon his flowing hair, forming ringlets on each side of his forehead, addressed a crowd of elders, emphasizing every sentence by pounding the long staff in his right hand heavily on the ground. Yonder was another circle, presided over by a hunchback giant who while speaking waved his arms up and down like poles, vociferating in the most fantastical manner. In one corner a lot of younger people stood huddled together and listened to the enthusiastic harangue of a fine-looking girl, whose wealth of raven black locks flowed in the wind. She

seemed to receive assent to all her assertions, by the continual nods and shaking of heads from the hearers. The most vivid and picturesque scene, however, ensued as there issued forth from out of one of the crowds an aged man, who I afterwards learned was a universally known retired merchant, respected, revered, and almost implicitly trusted in worldly and spiritual affairs, having lived here three-score and ten years, distinguished for his kindness, charity, good-humor and clear judgment. He was known everywhere, even by the little children, as "Old Father Selig." Getting down on his knees, he cried out at the top of his trembling voice: "Blessed be the Holy One, the Sovereign of the universe, who has preserved me and let me see this great and glorious day, now that I am sure that my Redeemer liveth!" Amidst the wildest rejoicings and acclamations of the multitude he ascended to where we stood, took the large flag which Miranda held, kissed her and me on the forehead, then led the way, and beckoning us to follow, made the air ring with the incessant exclamation, which was repeated by every one, "The Messiah hath come!" We followed him, as did the whole crowd, forming a triumphal procession leading us to the palace-like mansion of the Parnass, where all from the ship took up their residence, becoming the welcome guests of our hostess. Only one man, middle-aged, bald-headed, small, but wiry in appearance, with failing health written in every feature, going by the name of "Horeb," known as a mathematical factotum, an everlasting cynical doubter and grumbler, had warned the people of the assemblage against delusions and impositions; had tried to make his voice heard, in vain, cautioning against surprises and over-confidence. But he was unable to reach the ears of the sanguine, madly roused Hebrews, and

was seen to move away in the opposite direction from that which we took, shaking his head and wringing his hands. Unperceived I watched him closely, being to me the exemplification of the voice in the wilderness, the picture of truth so often crushed and smothered among the blind mortals of this earth by folly, falsehood and pretentious error.

Next day I sent out the prophetess, the captain and the rest of our company, presumably to see that my orders for fasting and praying were strictly followed. They had to work with all their influence and persuasion to undo the mischief wrought by Horeb, the singular individual, who gained many followers among the more sober and calculating of his mercantile co-religionists. He found powerful allies, too, among friendly and well-meaning Christians and Gentiles, who lived here in large numbers, and who were perfectly overwhelmed by the strange infatuation of their Mosaic neighbors. But this availed nothing in the end. I searched next day over the suburbs of the city, and at last found a spot most excellently suited for my purpose. It was a fine promontory, sloping gradually into the sea, with an immense plateau on top. I gave it at once the name of "Jew-hill," which it has retained unto all times. Thither I led, on the third day, at sunrise, the whole concourse of the Hebrew people, who had come from near and far, summoned by the messengers. Every one appeared in white, shroud-like garments. I could not count them, there were so many. They certainly numbered closely on one hundred thousand. How my eyes feasted on the doomed multitude! Their old friend Selig led the van, bearing our waving banner. When all had come to a halt, standing on the topmost height, the prophetess by my side, I addressed them in these words: "Children of God Zabaoth! Behold before

you the waters, as your ancestors saw the waves of the Red Sea. This day shall once again be manifested the Lord and His omnipotent power. Israel shall inherit anew the land of promise where milk and honey flows. Therefore follow ye now as your fathers of old did when I led them dry-shod through the briny deep. 'Messiah hath come!' and as you see me reach yonder boulders midway down this hill, follow your prophetess and hurry into the waves, which will part to your right and to your left, that you may with me reach on dry ground the blessed land of Palestine. Whosoever feareth the Lord, obey me!" Then I hastened to reach the appointed spot. With a cry of jubilee, Miranda at the head of all the people followed, shouting the everlasting refrain, "The Messiah hath come!" Reaching the waters they plunged in, those in front crowded on by those in the rear, only to be swallowed up in the foaming flood by the thousands. Miranda was the first to drown, followed by the old captain and his crew. I had screened myself beneath a cavity among the rocks against the irresistible impetus of the headlong rush, reappearing as all the crazed followers had passed, and feasting my eyes on the unbounded havoc of the masses, gurgling with death in the ocean. Now I rose on top of the highest boulder, screeching out in satanic triumph: "The Messiah hath come! the Messiah hath come!"

It never has been ascertained how many of my enemies perished that day. Great numbers, however, to my infinite regret, were saved by the humane and merciful sailors, who bravely rushed in among the drowning, and at risk of their own lives, rescued them by heroic efforts. I had just time, amidst the terror and unbounded consternation, to divest myself of my assumed priestly garments and disappear from sight and action. How I laughed at my friend,

the Grecian philosopher and statesman, Socrates, who declared in his ecclesiastic writings that it was a demon from hell who so fearfully beguiled those benighted Jews into perdition, under the crazy notion that "The Messiah had come!"

Notwithstanding the cruel havoc wrought by the events told here, my object to destroy these prosperous colonies of Jews was only partially attained. Out of this very affair grew the germ for greater and much more difficult events in a near future.

The Christian boatmen, saving large numbers, were congregated here partly by their business, partly by a curiosity to be present and witness the miracle which was to occur, the news of which had traveled all over the island. So humanely were these victims of blind enthusiasm treated by the Nazarenes, and so kindly cared for were the now impoverished and despairing survivors, that a great number of Jews abjured their faith and were baptized in the new church.

Very few of those who remained faithful abided in their old homes. The bitter recollections of the awful deception which they had experienced drove them, with the wandering staff in hand, into further exile. Most of these crossed the sea to a far-away land, beyond the wilderness of Petrea, where in a beautiful section of Arabia they founded new colonies. Soon they established for themselves an independent and prosperous government, and were joined by a host of their fugitive, persecuted brethren from other lands. There I shall meet them again at some future time, hoping to be done with them forever.

PHANTASMAGORIA X.

MAHOMET VS. JUDAISM.

If ever there was a paradisaical region on the habitable globe, it exists in that part of the Orient which is most aptly called "Arabia felix," the happy land of Arabia. Nature, foremost of all, has showered upon the country her most bountiful blessings. The earth is fertile, and produces without much effort from man her precious gifts, both of need and luxury. The climate is comparatively mild. The annual rains provide sufficient humidity to keep the ground moist and arable. The labor in the fields is as light and pleasant as that of a garden.

The lush grass of the meadows never fails the herdsman, as can readily be seen by the sleek cattle, the excellently conditioned camels, and the fine horses—the pride, boast and love of the natives. Here grow those wonderful, mighty palm-trees, the date-fruit of which is the principal food of the people. A hand lifted against any of these giant trees equals an affront to man, and to wantonly cut one down is regarded as murder. The social and political condition of the inhabitants used to be patriarchal, the head of the house being its absolute ruler. At the entrance of his tent he planted a pennon, and on it hung the protective scimiter. Who-soever entered here and broke the bread of hospitality was sacred as a guest, though he were to be found afterward the death-enemy of the family. Complete tolerance formed the absolute rule in religious matters. There lived here a host of fire-worshipping Gentiles, nearly equaled in numbers by the strictly ceremonious Jews, and a smaller colony of Christians. With the exception that everybody attended his own peculiar worship under liberal-minded ecclesiastics,

and followed the rules and rites of creed and faith, in public and private intercourse, no other distinction was known.

Equally patriotic, these people were always united in the defense of their common country, harassed and often assailed by warlike, barbarous neighbors. Friendship, love, sympathy and mutual helpfulness distinguished the communities, and not unfrequent intermarriages between all the sects aided in maintaining the good feeling and fraternal relations between otherwise incongruous neighbors. Such model conditions existed and were concentrated in the strongly fortified city of Khaibar and its dependent territory.

A citadel had been erected here at immense expense by the united efforts of the citizens, who considered the place impregnable against any assault from without. This was strengthened by a number of smaller fortifications extending all over the suburbs.

Here was settled now a large colony of Hebrews, who claimed that Moses, after the passage through the Red Sea, sent an army against the Amalekites inhabiting Midian, some of whom remained after the war in this invincible stronghold. There was, however, a tradition amongst a large number of other Israelites, that their ancestors took refuge here, posterior to the ignominious betrayal at the Island of Crete by a pretended Messiah, the "Pseudo-Moses."

Generations had passed since that event, but the memory of the disaster and the vile treachery of the mysterious impostor was kept alive, being told from father to son and descanted upon as one of the mysterious visitations of angry heaven against a sinful race.

For several centuries I, Ben Beor, had not con-

cerned myself about these people. I knew from the habits of the natives that their tastes were entirely abstemious, and my great and powerful ally, "Intoxicating drink," would avail me nothing in these regions. Other instrumentalities must be employed in order to break up the threatening, if yet incipient, power which flourished in a most congenial soil. I had during the past centuries carefully watched, guarded and guided the development and growth of maturing Christianity on the continent, and was advised lately of an entirely new and unexpected factor which had arisen in the East, well calculated to further and strengthen my cynical designs. This was one of the most phenomenal heroes of the Orient—the prophet Mahomet—and his still more unprecedented religion, Islamism.

Of low and humble origin, most favorable circumstances conspired to carry this man on the swell-waves of fortune to the highest pinnacle of fame, influence and wealth; and by even more rapid rushes prospered the new faith which he originated and propagated.

The career of both the man and his cause seems like a tornado, arising just in time to sweep everything before it. Reaching the zenith of affluence by the bestowal of princely gifts from relatives and friends, the exalted ecstasy and enthusiasm of his spiritual aspirations fitted most opportunely the exigencies of his peculiar surroundings.

The religion of the natives was a mixture of materialism and fanatic superstition, resting on no other foundation than tribal usage and legendary transmissions, ready to be overthrown and to crumble to pieces by the first fierce shock which should come from a sagacious and trusted hand. Judaism was at no time aggressively missionary. It could not accomplish this revolution. Its abstract prin-

ciple of "One invisible God, with no personal representatives on earth," and its high code of morality, law and equitable justice, were beyond the grasp and understanding of the heathen. Its unelastic ceremonial, entirely antagonistic to the free and unhampered mode of life among the children of the sun, made it impossible that the Mosaic belief should ever become a sweeping substitute for their religious cravings.

Much less, however, was Christianity, at its state in those times, suited to the Arabians, whose dual deity, "Vishnu" and "Shiva"—Light and Darkness—proved already too much for them; so it was not likely that a Trinity of the Godhead should find favor in their eyes. The incarnated divinity of the Messiah—an immaculate conception; a theory of salvation by faith,—such complex and supernatural dogmas were entirely beyond the comprehension of those simple people. The followers of Christ in their midst, as they learned without difficulty, were divided also to extremes among themselves, even in the cardinal principles of faith. To comprehend this baneful state of sectarianism among the Christians at this early period, an enumeration of a few of the leading sects will give an idea of their segregations. There were:

The "Sabellians," so called from Sabellius, a Libyan priest of the third century, who believed in the unity of God, and that the Trinity expressed but three different states or relations, all forming but one substance, as man consists of body and soul.

The "Arians," from Arius, an ecclesiastic of Alexandria in the fourth century. These affirmed Christ to be the Son of God, but distinct from Him and inferior to Him. They denied the Holy Ghost to be God.

The "Nestorians," from Nestorius, bishop of

Constantinople in the fifth century, maintained that Christ had two distinct natures—divine and human; that Mary was only his mother, and Jesus a man, and that it was an abomination to style her, as was the custom of the Church, the mother of God.

The “Monophysites” maintained the single nature of Christ. They affirmed that he was combined of God and man, so mingled and united as to be but of one nature.

The “Eutychians,” from Eutyches, abbot of a convent in Constantinople in the fifth century. These were a branch of the former, expressly opposed to the Nestorians. They denied the double nature of Christ, declaring that he was entirely God previous to the incarnation, and entirely man during incarnation.

The “Jacobites,” from Jacobus, bishop of Edessa in Syria, in the sixth century, were a very numerous branch of the Monophysites, varying but little from the Eutychians.

The “Mariamites,” worshipping the Trinity and regarding the Virgin Mary also as a god.

The “Collyridians,” composed chiefly of females. They worshipped the Virgin Mary as a divinity, and made offerings to her of a twisted cake called “collyris.”

The “Nazaraeans” were a sect of Jewish Christians who considered Christ the Messiah, as born of a virgin by the Holy Ghost, and possessing something of a divine nature, but they conformed in all other respects to the Mosaic law.

The “Ebionites,” from Ebion, a converted Jew who lived in the first century, were also a sect of Judaizing Christians. They believed Christ to have been a pure man, one of the greatest prophets, but denied that he had any existence previous to his birth.

There were many other divisions, such as the "Corinthians," "Maronites," and "Marcionites," who took their names from pious and zealous leaders. There were also the "Docetes" and "Gnostics," subdivided into various branches, with subtle enthusiasts for their heads. Some of these asserted the immaculate purity of the Virgin Mary; the "Docetes" asserted that Jesus was of a nature entirely divine, that a phantom, a mere form without substance, was crucified, and that the crucifixion, as well as resurrection, were deceptive mystical exhibitions for the benefit of the human race.

The "Carpocratians," "Basilidians," and "Valentinians," named after the Egyptian controversialists, contended that Christ was merely a wise and virtuous mortal, the son of Joseph and Mary, selected to reform and instruct mankind, but that a divine nature was imparted to him at the maturity of his age.

True, all these schisms were later on declared heretical, but at this time were in full sway and agitated fiercely in the Church.

Mahomet, with a zeal and aptitude unparalleled, had himself instructed by learned Hebrews and Christians amply as to their tenets before he declared his mission, and collated from all these divers principles what he considered with great shrewdness and wisdom best and most fitted for the people whom he intended to convert.

At the head of his holy book called the Koran, composed, collated and delivered at various epochs of his stirring career, stood the plain and by his countrymen easily understood and readily accepted dogma:—

"There is but one God ! and Mahomet is his prophet !"
"La ilaha il Allah ! Mahomet resoul Allah !"

The best and choicest of the Old and New Testaments and the Talmud were selected by him for a moral and ethical code, adapting these to the language and mode of thought of Arabians, and adding thereto such customs and ceremonies as he might cull from observances already existing, and which were deeply ingrafted in the life of his people. He also changed the seat of highest Divine residence from Jerusalem to Mecca, and enjoined annual pilgrimages to this new sanctuary. Almost the entire dietary ordinances, especially abstinence from the meat of swine, were adopted from the Mosaic law. The drinking of wine was forbidden. The Abrahamitic rite, performed at the age of thirteen years, was already in general observance.

Under these anomalous conditions, the founder of this new faith, with his impetuosity and exceptional good fortune, would have swept the entire Gentile world before him, had he not been checked to some extent by a great obstacle. This consisted in the fierce opposition of the Jews, who exerted an extensive influence over the country. Added to this was a dark flaw in the moral character of the prophet, consisting of an insatiable concupiscence, amounting to mania. No young and comely woman could with any safety to her chastity approach the lecherous libertine without falling a sacrifice to his lust.

He and his army of followers in the course of an exciting career brought up at last before the nearly impregnable fortress of Khaïbar. He had publicly vowed that her walls should be razed to the level of the ground, that her large Hebrew population should either accept the religion of Islam or be exterminated; but most of all, that the renowned Jewish beauty, Zainab, whose fame for comeliness and grace filled all the East, should be added to his victories over the female world. She had been

chosen for her beauty, grace and comely modesty as first maid of honor to the queen of the small empire, Safiaya, the wife of the king, Ibu al Rabi. This queen, young and fair herself, had a most envious and ambitious disposition, which manifested itself by cruel treatment of her fair attendant, in whom she saw a powerful rival in the eyes of the men, with whom she managed to have at all times some love intrigue, despite of her nativity, in which such follies were strangers, degrading her high position as first lady of the land. The indulgent husband, as usual, occupied as he was with the great cares of the realm, learned last of her shortcomings, although they were the subject of public gossip. Especially was the queen jealous of her maid's betrothed. Early in life Zainab had been engaged according to Israelitish custom, and was shortly to be wedded to her distant relative Marhab. This distinguished and remarkable man had become the wealthiest as well as the most powerful of all his tribe. Of a giant stature, symmetrically formed; a round, finely-shaped head covered with long dark hair; a broad forehead; somewhat small, coal-black piercing eyes; an aquiline nose, a full and smiling mouth, immense chest and shoulders, long powerful arms on which the veins and muscles stood out like cords—such was the imposing appearance of this modern Hebrew Samson, the renowned leader and chief of the defenders in and about the citadel, now besieged by the Mahometans. Their great prophet, roused to frenzy by a defeat which he had sustained at the hands of the citizens in holy Mecca, who refused admittance to him and his followers on their annual pilgrimage to the sacred shrine, the Ca-aba, determined to vent his anger upon the Jews. These had ever opposed him in his progress. He charged that they were instrumental in causing his defeat and humiliation,

which greatly dampened and checked the ardor of his disciples. Besides this, Khaïbar had become a place of refuge for many enemies, who made themselves obnoxious to his ambition. Therefore had he vowed that the city must fall. In the beginning of the seventh year of his first flight from Mecca, July 16, 622 A. D., from which period the Mussulmen count the advent of the new religion, and which is called "The Hegira," the resentful expedition started against the far-off country, which lay one week's journey north-eastward from the camp. The invading army was small but select, twelve hundred foot-soldiers and two hundred horse. With these were the brave division-leaders, Abu Becker, Omar, and quite a number of select officers known to be steadfast and reliable.

Before they departed I had joined their religion and army. Presenting powerful credentials from many of the most celebrated crowned heads of Europe, I was received by the Prophet with open arms, converted publicly amidst great pomp and ceremonies to the faith; received the name of Ali among the Orientals, and as a special honor was invested with the command of one of the principal divisions of the army. Using every means at my command with the utmost liberality, especially during the long, hot and dry journey toward our destination, I cunningly provided comforts for the much-suffering troops, and became soon a great favorite and a powerful leader, securing no less by tact than by guile the friendship and personal confidence of Mahomet, who repeatedly called me to his council of war and intrusted me with his plans and future prospects.

At length we entered the fertile territory of our foes. Then we began the campaign by assailing the inferior castles with which the country was studded. Many of these surrendered without a

struggle. The spoils being considered "gifts from Allah," were appropriated by the Prophet. Places of more strength and defended with stouter hearts were taken by storm. Soon we reached Khaïbar, facing the apparently impregnable citadel called Al Kamus. It was built according to the best known methods of fortifications, stood upon the pinnacle of a steep rock, and had been garrisoned by trusted defenders. Such confidence was placed in the reputed strength of the place that the king, Ibu al Rabi, had deposited here in secreted recesses an immense treasure.

One fine autumn morning, when all nature breathed peace, ripe plenty and spiritual contentment, we came in sight of the strong and frowning walls. On beholding the towering obstacles in our way, all the fierce passions and the fiery hatred of Mahomet's soul broke forth. In front of us there lay scattered a number of boulders. Springing upon one of the largest of these, the prophet threw himself upon his face; his two standard-bearers, one with the image of the Sun, the other with the Black Eagle, stood by his side. Then on his knees he uttered in most vehement tones and gestures this prayer:

"O Allah! Lord of the seven heavens and of all things which they cover; Lord of the seven earths and all which they sustain; Lord of the evil spirits and of all whom they lead astray; Lord of the winds and of all whom they scatter and disperse: we supplicate Thee to deliver into our hands this city and all that it contains and the riches of all its lands. To Thee we look for aid against this people and against all the perils by which we are environed."

Now raising himself erect he exclaimed: "This stone upon which I stand shall be holy for all times to come, equal to the Ka-aba of Mecca. Its name be known as the Mansela. Let the faithful, while

we dwell here, make daily seven circuits around it. If we conquer—as we shall—a mosque is to be erected on this spot, a splendid memorial for having supported the feet of the Prophet, and be it forever a sacred object of veneration to all pious believers in Al Koran.”

Amidst deafening huzzahs and shouts of “Allah-il Alla-ha!” the siege immediately commenced. Mahomet was everywhere; but at first neither his undaunted courage nor that of the army availed much. They had as yet no great experience in the attack of fortified places, especially when defended, as was this, by brave and skilled warriors, stubbornly resisting all efforts for advantage. Worst of all, the assailing troops suffered much from want of provisions, since they had brought with them no great quantity of supplies. The Jews on the approach of their foes had laid waste the level country and destroyed everything that could afford food or shelter around their capital.

Trenches were immediately dug, the work going on day and night. Battering rams were constructed with infinite labor and trouble, which as soon as in position played incessantly upon the walls. A breach at last was effected, but every attempt to scale the fortifications and enter was repelled with bloody sacrifices. Abu Becker led one assault; he had been intrusted with the standard of the Prophet. In spite of every brave effort, which continued for hours, his storming party was defeated and he was compelled to retreat. Omar fought all next day, with the same result and still greater losses. Dismay and faintheartedness spread in the ranks, and many counseled the abandonment of the fatal efforts.

Now I, who had thus far kept myself in the background, saw that my chance had come, and stepped boldly before the chief. “Intrust me with one

fair trial," I cried, "and my head may pay the forfeit if we do not overcome these accursed Hebrew sons of Belial." I was clad that day in a scarlet vest, over which was buckled a cuirass of steel. With robust and square form, speaking of prodigious strength, a healthy florid countenance, surrounded by a bushy beard, and eyes all glittering with zeal and fire, I must have made an imposing impression upon my chief. He, looking proudly and confidently upon my stalwart person, took from the belt his own renowned scimeter, named the "Dhu'l-Fakar," and handed it to me with the sacred banner of the golden Sun. "Take these and meet our enemies. I here pronounce thy title, 'Lion of the Lord,' a man who loves Allah and his Prophet and whom Allah and his Prophet love. Know no fear, nor turn thy back upon our foes!"

Thus blessed and adjured, I forthwith called my troops together, and without delay led the perilous attack. We scrambled up the great heaps of stones and rubbish in front of the breach, and I planted the holy standard on top. The Jews sallied forth to drive back the bold assailants. In the conflict which now ensued I met hand to hand with their commander, Al Rabi. With the irresistible strength of my right arm, and the holy sword I cut him in two with one stroke. As he fell dead at my feet the giant Marhab sprang forth to avenge his death. He was armored in a double cuirass, upon his head a double turban, wound around a helmet of proof, in front of which sparkled an immense diamond. A sword was girded on each side, and he brandished a three-pronged spear like a trident. Now we approached each other; the battle on both sides, as if by a mutual consent, came to a sudden halt. All eyes were directed towards the ensuing combat.

"I," cried the Jew, "am Marhab, armed at all points and terrible in battle!"

Then I responded, "I am Ali, whom his mother at birth surnamed 'Al Haïdara,' the rugged lion."

Now the Jewish champion made a fearful lunge at me with his trident, but with great dexterity I parried the stroke, and before he could recover himself a ponderous stroke from the scimeter "Duh'l-Fakar" clove through his buckler, passed through the helmet, reaching his stubborn skull, riving in twain his head even to the teeth. His gigantic form fell lifeless to the earth.

The Jews, on beholding the unexpected and fatal defeat of their vaunted heroes, with shrieks and cries of despair retreated quickly and in great disorder to the citadel. Our entire force now joined my troops and a general assault followed. In the heat of action the brazen shield which I carried on my arm was severed from its hinges, conspicuously exposing my body to attack. Instantly and with superhuman strength I wrenched part of a gate from its fastenings and used it as a buckler through the remainder of the fight. It was a prodigious feat, at which those of my men nearest to me looked in utter consternation and surprise.

During this fierce struggle two women might have been seen as eager and anxious spectators, watching the progress of the combat from a window of the royal palace. From what I learned afterward I can readily imagine their emotions and excited appearances, caused by diametrically opposite motives. Each one represented a type of feminine character, as unlike to the other as possibly can be described. One was the Queen Safiya, tall, dark and proud. Smarting under a great insult and indignity received but a few hours ago at the hands of her royal husband, she stood there in a tremor of anticipation, her coal-black eyes, like those of an angered serpent, watching the course of events, a personification of

deathly hatred and thirst for revenge. She had long since been suspected of treasonable sympathies with the approaching foes. Report had pictured to her vivid imagination the new Prophet as a great hero and woman-worshipper. She was impatient to have him come, conquer the country, and be in return conquered by her wiles and fascinations. Unguarded expressions of this nature had reached the king. On this self-same morning she related to him, already burdened with care and trouble, her dream of the previous night, and told him of her vision in which the sun descended from the firmament and with all his glory and refulgence nestled in her own yearning bosom. So exasperated and angry was the king at these words that he struck her a fierce blow, exclaiming, "Woman, thou speakest in a despicable parable. This Arab chief now seeks our destruction." Crazed by such affront, there she stood, glorying and rejoicing in the turn affairs had taken, the unnatural creature beholding with delight the fall of Israel's foremost leaders and the defeat of her nation's defenders.

The woman standing next to her was Zainab, the espoused of Marhab. Lithe, small in stature, her opaline eyes flashing with the emotions of love and virgin affliction, were riveted upon the scene of our combat. What harrowed feelings must have agitated her grief-stricken mind as she witnessed the terrible defeat of her adored lover! It is in evidence, as given by her companion later on, that as she saw him fall, with convulsively clenched hands she tore her hair, her eyes unnaturally dilated, her whole form trembled, and without uttering a word flew like one demented from the scene.

Meanwhile we captured the citadel. In the ranks of the Jews confusion and consternation had joined bloody hands. We quickly overtook the dismayed

garrison, and death stalked riot among the doomed citizens. The carnage which now ensued was awful. My men had captured six hundred archers and rock-throwers; they were given over to the sword. Similar slaughter was everywhere enacted. Yet it was strange and utterly inexplicable at the time what became of the immense number of inhabitants whom we knew had taken refuge here. They had disappeared as if by magic. Years afterwards were found numerous subterranean passageways, cut through the solid rocks, by which the fugitives escaped, taking with them their wives, children, treasures, valuable horses and camels. They escaped safely to the Pyrenæic peninsula, on the extreme southwestern boundary of Europe, to the countries called Portugal and Spain. There they formed the accursed settlements which in centuries to come were to give me again such endless troubles and labors.

Towards evening Mahomet himself entered with great pomp and martial music the captured city, and without loss of time occupied the deserted palace. He, and in fact all of us, were nearly famished, not having partaken of any food for the last twelve hours. It was well for us that the siege was ended. A few dusky Ethiopians were found in the kitchen, and they were commanded at once to prepare a plentiful meal. It took not much persuasion to make the trembling wretches act as bidden, and in a very short time the table was spread. Among the not over-plenty viands, a well-browned and steaming shoulder of a lamb was the most inviting dish. All this had been accomplished and supervised by the direction and under management of a deeply veiled Arabian woman.

As the company sat down to eat she stood screened in an alcove of the dining hall. Baschar, the first body-officer of our chief, had, as was required of

him by ceremony, cut a small morsel of the meat, chewed and swallowed it, and handed another to Mahomet, who brought it eagerly between his teeth. Suddenly through the main portal rushed Queen Safiya, with all the gestures of terror and dismay, and grasping the arm of the Prophet shrieked out: "For the love of the Lord do not swallow it, for it is death; yon stands the poisoner!" and her hand pointed to the woman in the hidden recess.

Quickly spitting out the meat, he declared to have heard the same warning miraculously issue from the very morsel which he lately held between his lips. We all were startled and terrified to behold Baschar drop to the ground in great convulsions, foaming at the mouth, while blood issued like a fountain from his nostrils, ears and eyes. He died in great agony. The woman in hiding was now dragged forth. As she stood in front of us all, she violently drew aside her veil and cried out, "I am Zainab, the avenger of my people and family! I thought if thou wert indeed a Messiah thou wouldst discover thy danger; if but a chieftain, thou wouldst fall and we should be delivered from a tyrant!"

Every one stood awed and silent. Mahomet had risen, clasping with both hands his chest, where the most excruciating pains racked him. By this time the effects of the poison had entered his system, and it troubled him at certain periods throughout the rest of his life. But the most dumbfounded of all present was I, beholding the face of the girl. It seemed like a vision. Are these features and is this form, in one or the other transformation, to haunt me throughout my whole blasted career? That was Merris—Merris, my first, my only love, risen from the dark past, and as it seemed from her never-closing tomb. From these racking imaginations I was startled by the rushing forth of one of our

officers, the brother of the dead Baschar. Like a tiger he sprang upon the woman, and before any one could speak or prevent his deed he stabbed her through the heart. She sank lifeless at his feet. Mahomet was very angry and indignant, for he admired courage and heroism, especially in so fair a creature, though his mortal enemy. Yet the fatal blow was given, and nothing remained for us to do but to make cautious and careful preparations for the night and our future safety.

Safiya had accomplished her wicked purpose. Of very great and fascinating beauty, having saved the life of the Prophet, it is no wonder that she found favor in his eyes. She was converted with indecent haste to the faith of Islam and married to Mahomet before we even left Khaibar. She became one of the most favored of his wives, being no doubt congenial in her wiles and graces to his similar disposition. She survived him in widowhood forty years after his long and eventful life.

Soon afterwards, under some plausible pretense, I left the army and the East, to the great regret of my Prophet-Chief and his followers. Loaded with honors and marks of distinction and rewarded by great treasures, I crossed the Hellespont and returned to my wanderings in the Transalpine lands, where my agents long since, as they informed me by messengers, clamored for my return.

PHANTASMAGORIA XI.

THE LAST OF THE KHAZARS.

It was now the middle of the tenth century. Brutal ignorance and beastly drunkenness should by this time have done their debasing work of riveting

the chains of serfdom so tightly around the necks of the masses, that tyranny and priestcraft might deem themselves absolutely secure. Vain calculation, that sees in humanity only the baser passions, and ignores in this terrible imaginations the better and higher impulses implanted by an Omnipotent power in the hearts of even the meanest of the race. Such was the lesson of disappointment which I once more experienced in my attempted work of destruction against Freedom, Truth and Tolerance.

While the elements and agencies of cruel persecution were making greatest headway among the governments of the Western continent, and while the natives had universally attached themselves to Christianity, amidst the signs of approaching storms there came a report from one of the Eastern realms which overthrew all preconceived schemes which I, Ben Beor, had formulated.

With the utmost cunning I had, immediately on my return from Arabia, incited against the irrepressible and ever-increasing Jewish population, whose flourishing congregations now sprang up everywhere, the jealousy and envy of their neighbors, especially the tradesmen and farmers. It was easy to make these, who owed to the Semitic merchants money and chattels, look upon the Hebrews as usurers and defrauders. Still more facile was the task of proving to the bigoted, priest-ridden rabble that the Jews were the foes of their church, the veritable descendants of the "Christ-killers." Reveling in anticipation of the early success of my plots against the abhorred followers of Mosaism, some of their tribe returning from a trading expedition near the far-off Ural mountains, brought from there the stunning news that they had discovered a colony of Finland Kosacs, the wild inhabitants of the steppes near the river Volga. This whole clan, some hundred years

ago, turned from heathenism to the covenant of Abraham. They had in course of time converted large numbers of adjacent tribes, forming a great and powerful government, a kingdom of Jews, under the benignant and liberal rule of a sovereign beloved and adored by all his subjects and feared and respected by the neighboring princes. Their king, Joseph, as was his name, had adopted a policy of sheltering and protecting refugees from persecution, irrespective of creed or country, and in so doing exercised the most tolerant liberality towards all, no matter of what religion or belief, who came to dwell in his flourishing dominions, the realm of the Khazars.

The returned travellers stated further that while passing through a province called Bulgaria, they were assailed by the inhabitants and a number of the company captured and imprisoned, the rest of the caravan escaping with great danger and peril to life and goods. On reaching the Hebrew capital, called the "White City," which was magnificently situated on the borders of the river Volga, they, under the leadership of their revered Rabbi, Jacob ben Eleasar, of Nemez, were conducted to the golden tent and into the presence of the "Chagan," the royal "Joseph the Ruler." Rabbi Jacob was the bearer of a highly important parchment scroll, intrusted to him by his friend and colleague, the celebrated Spanish ambassador, statesman and student, Rabbi Chasdai Ibn Shaprut, for delivery to King Joseph. This document, after many vicissitudes and trials, reached at last its destination. It is of great historical value, showing the ever-alive and interwoven interests which all these stiff-necked Israelites feel for one another. The contents of this parchment, from a copy in the possession of the travellers, and which now is before me, are therefore

reproduced here. It is written in beautiful Hebrew prose, translated by me as follows:

“Having learned from reliable reports of the existence of your royal dynasty and government, I have at endless pains endeavored to obtain a thorough knowledge of its truth and extent. It is not from idle curiosity and ambition that I have made these efforts, but from the burning desire to know whether there is a spot on earth where our people are free from tyrants. Were I sure that such is a reality I would disregard my high position at the throne of my exalted sovereign, and leave wife and children, wandering over valleys and mountains, by land or water, till I could throw myself prostrate before the throne of a ruler in Israel, rejoicing at his might and admiring his greatness.

“Deign to tell me in response, when these lines reach thy sovereign hands, from which of the lost ten tribes your renowned ‘Khazars’ have their origin. Describe to me their present political and warlike attitude, especially also whether your armies fight on the holy Sabbath, and whether you use in your intercourse the sacred language of our ancestors. No less let me know if there is preserved among you a tradition concerning the coming of our Messiah. For the cup of suffering of our people is overflowing, and we must daily bear the taunts of the Gentiles. Every nation has its own autonomy; only we are like fugitives and vagabonds all over this globe. But should it now prove true, as may be the will of the Lord, that there exists an independent ruler in thy high person, and a sovereign government among thy people, the Hebrew nation, then may all Israel once more raise its bowed head and need no longer stand humiliated and dumb before its adversaries.”

King Joseph was rejoiced on receiving the message, and caused his chief scribe to answer the same in full and in the Hebrew language. It being also a document of intrinsic historical value, an excerpt

thereof, which is made from a copy clandestinely obtained by me, is appended hereto. It says:

“I, the Chagan, ruler of the kingdom of the Khazars, have received with great joy the autograph message of my Spanish brother, the renowned Rabbi Chasdai. Thou art mistaken to believe that my people were primevally of Jewish origin. Our great ancestor—may his memory be blessed!—the immortal Bulan, a great Khan of the Finland Kossacs, conceived an unconquerable disgust against the barbarous heathenism of his race, and with the help and inspiration of the great Jehovah, after many trials and temptations, preferred to accept for himself and nation the religion of Moses and the Prophets. In this a learned Rabbi by name of Isaac Sangan had greatly assisted, and with his piety and honorable conduct prevailed. I am the eleventh of a glorious line of kings. My dominion reaches from the Ural to the Kaspi Sea, and many other provinces are subject to my sceptre. The entire country is successfully worked by the husbandmen and herders, blessed with commerce and trade. Concerning the Messianic hope, which I share with thee and our whole people, we here in my realm know nothing definite. Our eyes are directed towards the holy temple to be rebuilt in Jerusalem, and the renowned schools of Babylonia: May it please the God of our fathers soon to send us his Redeemer.

“Thou speakest of thy great desire to see me face to face. I reciprocate this as an ardent wish of my soul. Then shouldst thou be to me like unto a father, and I would be thy son, who willingly might share with thee the care and management of this government.”

This answer, chirographed on finest vellum, and enclosed in a silver capsule of masterly workmanship, was handed for return to Rabbi Jacob. That pious man failed not to relate to King Joseph the outrages which the caravan had received and the

imprisonment of companions still held in Bulgaria. The king raged when he learned of this cruel perfidy. He forthwith sent swift messengers to the Bulgarians, demanding the immediate release of the Jewish prisoners, and an official treaty-stipulation for the safety and fair treatment of all his co-religionists dwelling there or passing through as travellers; threatening in case of refusal to kill every non-Israelite under his rule, and that he would send his army into a land which maltreated inoffensive persons. The aggressive barbarians, nominally Christians, knowing the power and bravery of the mighty neighbor, well aware that his threats were not empty words, quickly complied with the peremptory demand; sent back the prisoners loaded with presents, and a written treaty stipulating peace and friendship forever with the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

I was dumbfounded on learning this news and its consequential extent. Here I had deemed myself secure in the final result of a scheme, fostered for centuries, to extirpate the last trace of that tenacious monotheism and its laws for the disenthralment of the nations, when this report woke me rudely from my sanguine expectations. I resolved that such a spectre must be destroyed, no matter at what sacrifice. My numerous agents all over the lands, the dealers in the ardent beverage, the fanatical priesthood, and the lynx-eyed spies of the governments, were soon informed of the impending danger; of the absolute necessity of my immediate departure for the scene of destructive action, and of the unconditional policy to be pursued by all of them during my unavoidable absence, for holding in check our wary opponents.

Does it not seem strange that a handful of beings, not more than one per cent. in the aggregate, should

give us, the rest, such anxiety, care and trouble? Yet so it has been since their departure from Egypt, and I fear me so it will be to the end of time.

And now after careful and deliberate preparations I departed without further delay to the East. The highest prelate of the church had, on my representations and request, readily appointed me as a nuncio. The Emperor of Germany commissioned me as a special envoy to the several principalities lying at the centre of my mission.

Thus equipped, I reached after many difficulties and hardships the barbarian court of Sviatoslaf. This prince had lately become of age and received from his mother Olga the throne and realm as "Tsar" over the southern part of Russia, adjacent to Bulgaria, and near the land of the Khazars. They resided at the keep of Novgorod, a rude castle in the midst of a number of villages of clay-built huts. Here a strange state of affairs prevailed. The "Tsarina," widow of the late powerful ruler, Igov, had been regent for several years, until her son reached his majority. This Scandinavian woman had held sway over her people with a powerful hand. By the strength and adroitness of her character, as well as the vindictiveness of her disposition, she soon became the terror of her many enemies and the feared ruler of her dominions. But she was glad when the time arrived that she could lay down the lance and buckler, which she had donned during the regency, and confide the care of her ever-turbulent state to the firmer hands of her son, the legitimate successor to the throne. She had personally watched over his physical and mental training, and he proved to be the very image of his dead father. Proud as only a mother can be of a son, her idol and ideal, she had him crowned and laid the sceptre confidently into his hands. She longed and sighed for peaceful

days. I found her yet in the prime of womanhood, handsome and commanding, the admiration of her male subjects and worshipped by the females. Underlying a harsh and stern aspect there was a fine sympathetic strain of loveliness and goodness, that made it easy for me to find favor in her eyes and influence especially her religious feeling. Tired as she was long ago with the coarse, vulgar Slav-heathenism, she soon became the first Northern woman who joined as a convert the Christian religion. For this purpose I accompanied her on a special tour to the imperial capital, the city of Tsargard, residence of the Tsar of the Greeks, where she was baptized by the Primate of the East, the Emperor Porphyrogenitus, himself acting as godfather, bestowing upon her the illustrious name of Helen. On our return home this change of faith was much ridiculed and laughed at by the boorish clans and her unimpressible son. Several violent scenes took place at the palace when she endeavored to persuade Sviatoslaf to follow her example and become a Christian. The young and self-willed monarch was entirely under the influence of a magician and jester, Odin, whose coarse and vulgar wit and arrogant pretensions were combined with the most subtle finesse, native sense of human nature, and an instinctive foresight and penetration into causes and effects concerning the state-affairs of his mighty master.

One day Odin, pretending to catch flies from the wall and executing funny capers during this foolish pastime, which set us all laughing, suddenly wheeled round, and with a most ludicrous squint started towards the company seated at the table. When behind the Tsar he snatched the golden crown from the imperial head and placed his bell-cap in its place. "There!" he cried, "thou, master, wilt make a better

fool than thy servant, and I will do better as a ruler. I will at least not let the first, best strolling foreigner tweedle me into his pockets and make sport behind my back." I felt my cheeks flush at these pointed shafts hurled at me, but the Tsar good-naturedly turned the sally adroitly off, and throwing the tinsel cap at the fool's feet, declared that he had heard of a story before wherein a "donkey had worn a crown." "Take it back, then," stammered the bright jester, placing quickly the jeweled head-gear respectfully on his master's head, but the back-side in front, giving an appearance which made even the most discreet persons shout with laughter, he moving his hands and fingers dexterously in such a manner as to actually throw the shadow of an ass conspicuously upon the wall. "Now let the stranger bring his Madonna and his Saviour," he continued, "and when they sprinkle thee with their holy-water, as they cajoled our empress-mother, it will turn thy ancestral faith, and we all will be changed into bald-headed monks."

With a lightning-like motion Odin caught the baretta from my skull, exposing to view my well-tonsured crown, which caused the most hilarious uproar, in which even the Tsar joined. Quiet, however, was restored very soon upon the announcement of the arrival of three eminent ambassadors from neighboring Bulgaria, who requested an immediate audience. Queen Olga was sent for to be present at the interview, to hear what messages these unexpected guests should bring.

"We come," said their leader, a stalwart, fine and noble-looking man, "from the far-off city of Kief, to bring from our sovereign greeting and friendship to thee, all-powerful ruler of the dominions of the Russ. We are commissioned, if it so shall find

pleasure in thine eyes, to negotiate a treaty against our mutual enemy, the Khazars, whose insolent powers are a standing menace to our borders, and who have on several occasions offered insult and outrage, in spirit of haughty overbearing, to all their neighbors, but especially against us, the people of Bulgaria. They are Jews, foes to God and men, and should therefore be exterminated from the face of the earth. Hence, if it so be thy will, let us unite our armies, make war on these malefactors, and divide their cities, lands and spoils between us. In this we will gladly acknowledge thee our superior and become faithful vassals to thy power. We await thy gracious and favorable answer."

They now were permitted to retire. In the consultation which ensued, by command of the Tsar, my views on the subject were asked first and foremost. By sophistical, yet no less lucid and powerful terms, I, as may be expected, urged the advisability, nay, the necessity, of complying with the request. I explained that it was contrary to the best interests of his majesty's realm, especially needing and seeking an outlet into the Caspi, to permit so powerful a rival to exist and most likely to extend its already growing dominions; moreover, that a singular and fantastic religion which they professed, and which they continually and successfully propagated among the ignorant and unwary hordes of the mountains, seducing them from ancient faiths and creeds, should no longer be permitted to rule supreme.

Here the Queen broke fiercely and passionately in: "They have crucified the Saviour of the world! Gentile and Christian should combine to fulfil the curse which is forever on their heads until the last of the race is killed."

His majesty seemed powerfully affected by the intensity of feeling and dramatic pathos with which

these words issued from the lips of a woman and mother. He however turned abruptly to the jester, inquiring, "What has my fool to say concerning all this?"

"We are bears," he growled, "and the monkeys have come to help them catch the wily fox, these Jews. Why should we disturb our peace, quiet and comfort, to fight a distant people because they sing a different tune from ours when they are praying? I have learned that they raise many and fine swine, but never eat any hog's meat. Does not this make it plenty and cheap in the market? They punish their own flesh to enter into the covenant of their religion. Well, is not this better than if they punished mine? They are said to be a smart lot; we cannot make peace with them in the manner in which thou, my worshipped lady, fooled the stupid louts of Korosthenes, thy enemies. We all remember that thou didst offer them terms on payment of three pigeons and three sparrows for each house. Having received them, there was tied lighted tow to the tails of the birds, and then they were set free to fly straight back to their homes. Houses and barns with thatched roofs instantly took fire. Had I aught to say I would send these messengers back to their master, and let my troops directly follow on their heels, to teach those boors a lesson which they would not soon forget, for attempting to ensnare us into their cunning wiles. Look ye," and here he danced round and round with strange gesticulations and mystic movements, a sign that the pretended spirit of prophecy was coming upon him. Then he leaped upon the dais before the Tsar, and was soon fearful to behold. He screamed out his words, foaming at the mouth. "Have you heard of the Patzmacks, the savages, the most ferocious of all barbarians, who are worse than wild beasts? They

dwell in the land beyond the realm of the Khazars, where they are held in check by Jewish swords. Destroy this barrier and the cannibals will come and eat our wives and children. Lo, I see them with blood-dripping mouths and frenzied eyes!—there they come, come, come!” His voice failed him, his strength was exhausted, and he fell senseless to the ground.

The Tsar and his mother left the place. This was the signal for the end of the council. A few mornings after, however, the ambassadors departed with rich presents for themselves and their king, escorted by a guard of honor and the written stipulations for a treaty securely stored in their kaftans. The Tsarina had prevailed. Everything now became bustle and noise with military preparations. Insidiously my work went on. Very soon, in every tent, a drink made its appearance, which the people called “Votki.” Sparingly at first, just enough to rouse the fighting spirit of these hordes to the highest pitch, but plenty was provided for the time when battle and carnage were to rage, to make these already wild people nearly on a par with the man-eating Patzmacks. Henceforth “Votki” was to become the bane and curse of the whole Russian Empire, as it had already proved among the Western nations. Shortly after we were on the march. Queen Olga at home resumed her office as regent during the absence of her son. Odin was found to be hopelessly insane. I joined the commander as one of his leading camp-companions. Each clan was arrayed in its own fantastic dress and armor, under leadership of a “Hetman” chosen by his own tribe. All, however, were splendid and daring troopers, seated upon small but sturdy chargers, often executing in the spirit of playful bravado, astonishing feats of arms and horsemanship.

In due course of time, after continued travel attended by numerous difficulties, we joined our waiting allies. These consisted mostly of foot-soldiers, provided with all kinds of arms—swords, battle-axes, bows with poisoned arrows, and curiously constructed sling-shots which they used with great dexterity and effect. One notable feature of their army consisted of a large body of exceptionally tall and robust-looking Amazons, who proved themselves even fiercer and braver fighters in battle than the men.

After a short rest and fraternization with the new comrades, on went the invading host under chief command of Sviatoslaf, tirelessly pushing forward towards the land of the unsuspecting and unwarned Jews. Passing a few weeks in tramping through the rough and unbroken country, we reached at last the outskirts of the kingdom of the Khazars. Here a short halt was made; then the whole mass threw itself with irresistible impetuosity upon the land. In our wake was blood and death. Slain men, women and children strewed our path. Nothing living was spared. "Sheol" let loose on earth could not present a more appalling sight than the horrible scenes which we left behind our troops. On the first news reaching King Joseph, he made ready for a brave resistance and defense of homes and country. Unfortunately for him, his military strength consisted mostly of hireling Moslems, strong and dauntless generally, but with no heart in the impending struggle. No sooner became they aware of the terrible battles awaiting them, than they were panic-stricken and fled in dismay, a disbanded rabble of cowed Arabians. So the poor king saw himself helpless and abandoned and at the utter mercy of the approaching destroyers. Yet, with the courage of a hero, he effected the safety of large numbers of his hapless subjects, by directing and

speeding their precipitous flight, great numbers reaching the Balkan mountains, and from there passing over to different countries in all directions. Others made for the seashore, luckily finding several ships, and reaching friendly ports of the Mediterranean. Within a week we came to the suburbs of the "White City." Exultingly we stormed the doomed capital, feasting in jubilant expectation on the havoc to be made upon our dismayed prey. As we approached, to our surprise, suddenly little flickers of flame issued here and there from the several quarters of the town. Then a mass of fire enveloped the centre, where the royal golden tent was situated, and presently the most awful conflagration ensued, wherein the irrepressible columns of towering blazes shot heavenwards, lighting up the sky for miles, and throwing the scorching, blinding heat, cinders and ashes, directly into our faces. I, myself, with a few other braves, had pressed forward to the king's abode, and reached there just in time to see the fire make its first headway upwards. From inside, through all the uproar and turmoil, we heard distinctly the voices of the inmates in prayerful song. One of these, a tremulous strong basso, was heard above all the rest. The words, repeated over and over, came fainter and fainter as if from the dying, yet to the last pronounced with easily understood intonations :

"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is but One—
Jehovah alone is God!"

Disappointed and chagrined, we left for a place of shelter and safety.

Such was the fall of the much-vaunted Hebrew dominion and sovereignty, and thus miserably ended "the Last of the Khazars."

The prophecy and curse of the magician Odin, however, soon became a fearful truth. While the cruel

destruction of a cultured and civilized nation went on unsparingly, and carnage and fire raged rampant over a lately flourishing and beautiful land, the countless happy homes of the husbandmen and shepherds; while the brawling and besotted conquerors completed their conquest amidst ravage and ruin; the check that hitherto held the wild men of the woods, the Patzmacks, cowering in their earth-holes, was broken. The half-naked wretches issued forth in bands of ten and twenty, dispersing themselves over the country, festering with the corpses of the slain; satiating their wolfish greed by devouring the carrion. It was the most sickening and revolting sight imaginable, as they were tearing with their bird-like claw-nails pieces of the already decomposed human bodies, munching over them with the ferocity of hyenas. Soon, however, they grew bolder, attacking and killing stragglers of our people. They were just cunning and wily enough to place themselves successfully outside of the reach of chastisement, being familiar with every nook and corner of the districts, whither they hurriedly fled on the approach of the least danger.

Then they combined in larger numbers for the horrible work under a most audacious leader, and not a day passed now that in one or the other camp, signal evidences of their fatal presence were not visible. They showed themselves utterly callous and indifferent to death, and at no time could any be taken prisoners; for when escape and flight became impossible, with lightning-like rapidity they thrust sharp flint assigais into their breasts, after which they almost immediately expired. Incessantly the abhorrent outrages went on, until at last the aborigines appeared at the very doors of the city of Kief. No such terror and dread ever before shook soldiers and people. The country which heretofore had

resounded with pious prayers and melodious psalms, was now given over to every conceivable misery, devastation and ruin which the human mind is capable of imagining. Jew, Gentile and Christian were alike and equally punished by this overwhelming disaster, the beastly visitation from the cannibal Patzmacks.

PHANTASMAGORIA XII.

PETER THE HERMIT.

It was now the year 1078. I had attained my purpose in destroying the flourishing realm of the Khazars; was tired out with the sickening details, and disgusted with the coarse brutal people who had acted as my confederates and allies.

At the earliest opportunity I made some convenient and plausible excuse and took my departure with my too willing servants, who had also grown tired of their surroundings. We made our way to the nearest port of the Black Sea, designing to return to the Western lands by water. Thus we reached Odessa, as yet a primitive settlement of fishermen and sailors. This place was already known to be a fine harbor, where a great many ships from every clime landed to discharge their cargoes and exchange them for such products as the many nationalities dwelling along this section would offer for barter. A magnificent bay is formed here by the meeting of the large rivers Dniester and Dnieper. A fine merchantman lay ready to sail for Genoa, the great Italian port. I and mine boarded the ship in a few hours after our arrival at this point. There were no other passengers, and the officers and sailors being continually engaged with the difficult naviga-

tion among the shoals and reefs of the hazardous route, we were left to ourselves while the journey lasted. Hardly ever out of sight of land, the countries which were passed formed the most beautiful panoramas of semi-tropical scenery. In the enjoyment of observing these, and the balmy atmosphere, which seldom varied, the time quickly passed, and before we expected it, the grand and picturesque harbor of our destination came into view. It so happened that on our arrival at Genoa another ship was about to depart for Marseilles, in France. My urgent solicitations persuaded the captain to delay long enough for us to go up to the city in order to purchase such supplies and comforts as we deemed necessary for the continuation of the journey. By evening we had already left the Adriatic and entered upon the boisterous Mediterranean sea. The lurching and heaving vessel was crowded with all kinds and classes of passengers. Among these were a large number of priests. Judging by their garbs they belonged to the Roman hierarchy. There were a number of common "padres," several bishops and one cardinal. It was amusing to watch some of these ogle the young women among the passengers, staring boldly at the shy creatures, most of whom were exceedingly pretty and attractive in their picturesque native costumes. They, pretending not to notice the rude conduct of the reverend fathers, continually cast stealthy side-glances at the audacious admirers.

Among this mixed crew there was a cowed monk, in coarse woolen garb and sandals to his feet, who attracted my special attention. He walked incessantly, fore and aft, backward and forward, continually muttering to himself. Of diminutive size and mean appearance, his large, piercing eyes were of wonderful fire and brilliancy, and his peculiarly

strange features spoke of strength of will and indomitable character. One would have recognized him among thousands a "leader of men." On the second morning out he passed me in his never-ceasing promenade, and stopping for an instant, he looked me over with his dark and penetrating glances, as if to peer into the very depths of my heart. I made free to offer him from a small flagon which I always carried, a sip of sherbet, the use of which had become general, especially among the clergy. I had bought a supply of the exhilarating beverage, recommended by a Genoa merchant as a certain antidote against sea-sickness, and had added to its ingredients a good dose of my own intoxicant. The Hermit, for such he proved, soon became affable and talkative. The following is the story of his strange life, which he told me during the days of our now placid voyage to Marseilles:

"My name is Peter. I was born at Amiens, about the middle of this century. My parents were of high nobility, and, like many of their class, rich in impoverished estates, but poor in the required wealth necessary to uphold their station. It cost them the utmost efforts and sacrifices to place me comfortably at Paris for obtaining an education worthy the son of a gentleman. Through my own efforts obtaining a livelihood and making existence possible with teaching, I augmented my training by a trip to Italy, from whence I returned a short while after to my native country fully prepared to join the army. The French were then engaged in Flanders carrying on war against the Dutch. All my inclinations and tastes were those of a student, in utter dissonance with the rough and boisterous life of the carousing soldiery. Proving of small service in the ranks, my desire to return home was not much opposed by the commander. I soon found myself discharged, and

back in the castle of my sires, which was falling to ruins. Near by us, in our immediate neighborhood, lived a wealthy country squire. He had an only daughter. She was a gaunt and sinister-looking creature. I was prevailed upon by my parents, and especially my mother, whom I passionately loved, to enter the ranks of the wooers of that no longer youthful maiden. A large number of such sordid aspirants for her gold-filled hands constantly came and went. At last I was the successful candidate, and we were married amidst the grand pomp and parade which my father-in-law so dearly cherished. The marriage, as such speculative compacts generally turn out, proved anything but happy. In due time we were blessed with two children, both of whom, after giving us great anxieties and troubles, died in infancy. This sad loss increased the morose and uncompanionable character of my wife; she made my life henceforth unendurable by humiliations and chagrin, changing my natural disposition of hopefulness and good-humor till it became sinister and callous. One day when her scolding and fretting became unbearable I fled into the wilderness, and thenceforth lived in a solitary cave far away from the habitations of men. I provided as best I could the necessaries of life, and a few books which I had brought with me, combined with daily excursions and rambles, helped to pass away the weary time. Soon my gray hair and beard grew to abnormal length, and this with my wild aspect and faded and tattered garments must have given me such a frightful appearance, that even my own mother would have failed to recognize her son. The few people who casually met me when I strayed from my abode fled at the strange sight, and I was soon known throughout the surrounding country as 'Peter the Hermit.' So time passed. One day, late towards evening, a party

of travellers stopped at the entrance of my cave. They were pilgrims returning from a visit to the Holy Land, who had lost their way, roaming helplessly about since morning, and were now entirely exhausted. They could not, if they would, proceed any further. In spite of my reluctance I had to become 'my host' to them, furnish what food there was on hand, and make them as comfortable as my scant means would allow. Soon they felt refreshed, were sitting upon the rude logs of fallen trees plentifully lying near us on the leaf-strewn ground. The evening was beautiful. A big, bright, silvery moon shed her light through the open spaces, making the scene as clear as day. Myriads of stars twinkled merrily through the boughs. The strangers told me of their journey, and depicted the sufferings, trials and inhuman hardships which they and every visitor to Jerusalem had to undergo at the hands of the merciless Mussulman. Their story seemed almost beyond credence. The whole fiery enthusiasm of my sensitive nature awoke, and I determined then and there to satisfy myself upon the far-away spots if such atrocities were offered to the Christians in search of the places where our Messiah had lived and suffered, and these inhumanities perpetrated, too, by the hands of the infidel Arabians. Next morning I departed with my guests, conveying them to my former home. No persuasion, however, could induce them to tarry, and they left me without entering the castle. Here I found everything changed. My parents and wife had died some time ago. The estates were in the hands of a keeper, one of my old servants. He barely would believe me when I told him who I was, since the report had gotten abroad that the heir had gone to some foreign land. It did not take long to satisfy him of my identity, after which he shed copious tears for joy of having found his old master. With

his own hands he trimmed my long beard and hair, prepared a bath for thorough ablutions, and brought from my former wardrobe such of my gowns as I favored to wear. Dressing myself in these for the time being, I now declared to him my resolution to join, as soon as my worldly affairs were settled, the holy monks in the abbey near by. My financial matters were in splendid condition. The large funds accrued from the inheritance of my late wife had been well cared for by the courts, and I found no difficulty with the magistrates in having the money turned over to me, its rightful claimant. As soon as these matters were brought to a successful completion, I applied to the superior of the cloister and found ready admittance as a novice in the order. After undergoing the prescribed ordeals and acquiring the necessary knowledge, I was formally admitted as a member of the Benedictines, taking the vows of poverty, abstinence and sacerdotal devotion. Permission was asked and granted me for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and I started out soon on my self-imposed mission, to learn by personal observation the truth of the reports related to me by the travellers who visited me when a hermit. From the time I landed in Asia my experiences were terrible indeed. Inhumanity, atrocity, and cruelty some barbarous hands of the brutal and greedy Saracens visited upon my poor, inoffensive person. The requests for food of our small band of pious travellers were generally answered with blows rained upon our heads and backs. When approaching the springs or wells to satisfy our burning thirst, we were driven away with kicks, and the very children taunted us as 'cursed dogs of Franks.' On many occasions we barely escaped being murdered in broad daylight. The vaunted hospitality of the East seemed entirely to have died out, as far as regarded the sojourners from

Christendom. The most extraordinary cunning and double-facedness was used by the heathens to lure us from the right direction on our journey, not only at our inquiries concerning the nearest and best roads, but blandly offering their advice unasked and unsolicited. How many unwary and unsuspecting sojourners they may have drawn into ambush and either killed or sold into slavery will never be known. Open violence against our lives and liberty they dared not attempt, as we were provided with a special protective firman from the highest authorities at Constantinople. This shielded us, however, in no instance against the indignities and brutalities to which we were continually exposed. Our backs and bodies were bloody and raw from being scourged. We looked emaciated and like skeletons from hunger and thirst long before we reached Jerusalem. With gnashing teeth and boiling blood I recorded and repeatedly reiterated a solemn vow to Heaven, that if life and strength were spared me, never to rest until the high-road to Calvary should be safe to pious wanderers; never to rest until the Holy Land, now defiled by the accursed Ishmaelites, should be in possession of the great rulers of Christendom. Soon after my arrival in the holy city I presented myself before the venerable patriarch of Jerusalem, and laid before him well-matured plans for the delivery of Palestine. With fervent paternal blessing, he assured me of his entire approval of my prospective mission, and furnished me with autograph letters of highest recommendation and endorsement to his Holiness Pope Urban II., the most affable, powerful and enthusiastic Vicar of God who ever occupied the august chair of St. Peter. I hurried back as fast as circumstances would permit to Europe, and in less than three months presented myself in Rome at the Vatican. Here a very cordial and gracious

reception was accorded me, and I was permitted before a conclave of the highest church dignitaries to recite with the fervor and eloquence burning in my heart and soul the shame and indignity which disgraced the Catholic world, and the foul persecutions and dire cruelties practiced unmolested and unavenged against devout members of the faith by the haughty and merciless Turk. With the unanimous approval of the cardinals and bishops I was commissioned by the holy father to proceed on my sacred errand, to preach deliverance of the land of the Lord throughout all the countries faithful to the Cross. Some of the ecclesiastics on board the ship had been witnesses of these proceedings and were ordered to assist in my work. But they are an indolent, worthless set, an unpromising material with which to co-operate. Yet it is the best at present available. As soon as we shall reach our destination I will make France and all Europe ring with the story of the sufferings of Christian pilgrims, and bring every knight, lord and prince into the warfare for the crucifix. From hut to palace, in the highways and byways, will go forth the cry to arms, and the emblem of the Saviour's army, the cross on the shoulders, will be pinned on by millions of the people, the high and the low, the rich and the poor. Then the countless legions of the brave Crusaders will soon be on the road to conquer 'the land of promise.' Now you know my story and errand. May I beseech you to join my cause, with your splendid head and strong arm? I need valiant and true associates. Permit me to decorate your garb, as the very first convert I have made, with this cross, the insignia by which hereafter the confederates of the holy war will be known, and by which they will recognize each other. Hereby I appoint you commander of the first legion which I may

gather to take the field for conquering Palestine. I see the hand of Providence for the success of my gigantic enterprise in having found, even before landing, one in whose bravery, fidelity and zeal I have almost at first sight an instinctive and absolute trust." Here ended the story of Peter the Hermit.

He took from the capacious inside pocket of his garb a bright red cross of woolen stuff and dexterously fastened it on my coat. I did not resist, for during his long recital I had conceived vast plans fitting my own purposes. Their realization and immense possibilities seemed to loom up as certainties in coalition with such unexpected and unforeseen agencies as the fanatic efforts of this inspired monk. I made myself known to him as "Count William, a travelling builder," promised him every aid and co-operation in my power, placing my means and services at his entire disposal, and, with the usual way of new converts, proved equally zealous for the success of the newly espoused cause. We became almost inseparable during the rest of our journey, and could daily be seen walking the deck together, gesticulating and arguing in most lively and, no doubt, often grotesque manner, to the great amusement of the other passengers.

Among the motley crowd of the ship's company I had noticed nearly from the start a small group of people, who kept themselves isolated from the others, generally retiring to some remote corner. It consisted of a young man not over forty-five years of age, an older one, not quite three-score, and a young and most beautiful maiden, seated, generally, between the two. There was no mistake about it, features and manners revealed them to be Jews. Both men wore skull-caps; the younger was otherwise dressed in the spruce French fashion, had an unusually bright and intelligent face, surrounded by

a wealth of dark, long curls. His eyes were exceedingly brilliant, especially when the mobile features were at play while discoursing with the others. He generally held a medium-sized leather-covered volume between his fingers, at which, from time to time, he glanced, as if for reference. The elder wore a long kaftan of fine material, fastened by an embroidered sash. He was very tall and well formed. His hair and long, flowing beard were plentifully sprinkled with the silver of age, giving him a distinguished and venerable air. But the appearance of both males was completely eclipsed by the radiant beauty of the girl, who sat gracefully between them. The complexion of her face was of that light, creamy color, upon which the pink of carnation lay delicately spread as if by the hand of a master-artist; the long, black hair resembled in gloss and color that of the older man; brilliant eyes, overshadowed by finely-pencilled brows; a nose daintily and exquisitely moulded; deep red, magnificently rounded lips covered a row of pearly teeth. Faultlessly attired in rich levantine silk garments, which fitted closely to her upper body, she had, usually, an open scroll upon her lap; her tiny hands wielding a quill, which she ever and anon dipped in the silver ink-vessel held by the elder companion, while she wrote the dictations of the younger man. Nor was this mechanical work only; for, as her shell-like, little ears caught the sentences from the dictator, she often threw a quick, intelligent and surprised look at him, and then glanced, with eyes speaking admiration and wonderment, at the elder, nodding her shapely head in such a bewitching manner that no one could mistake the meaning, saying more distinctly than words: "What do you think of this?" Unlike all my former feminine subjects of admiration, there was something in the spiritual make-up of this girl which

reminded me at first sight of the shadow-vision, lurking ever in my memory—the never-forgotten Merris, princess of Egypt. With mystic, magnetic power I felt drawn towards this lovely maiden, raising in me a whirl of passion, longing and heart-ache. And while pacing up and down, listening to the tale of the Hermit, I caught myself frequently wandering to where she sat. Peter must have noticed this too, for on several occasions, when gazing intently upon that group, he asked me, “What is the matter? do you feel sick?” or, “Do you hear what I say?” Nor was I the only one of the passengers to whom these people became the absorbing centre of attraction. Reading and writing were, in those days, such strange, uncommon arts, and the possession of a book so unusual a prize, that the illiterate priests who were with us aboard, and who, besides their litany and missals, knew little of any other learning, viewed those Hebrew travellers with looks of stupefied amazement, their lustful eyes gloating from a distance upon the fresh, exquisitely beautiful maiden who, unheard of in all their experience, wielded the pen like an expert. I instinctively recognized the cursed book as the younger man raised it, from time to time, to his vision—the maledicted Pentateuch, with its laws for human Right, Freedom and Fraternity. Nor could I help reflecting upon the beastly ignorance permeating most classes of all society everywhere—everywhere, while these offsprings of Mosaism had learning—aye, even their young daughters could read and write their damned “holy language.” They made it one of the highest religious ambitions to multiply the copies of the Bible, and the brightest and profoundest minds were constantly engaged in elucidating its truth and power by commentaries and exegesis. I had not a doubt that these three wanderers were now

engaged in some such work, while their benighted fellow-passengers passed the time in ribald song and jest, throwing dice and playing with pasteboard cards, or clandestinely ogling with the women.

From the time that my attention and interest had been attracted by these three strangers, I tried to find out who and what they were. Considering their exclusiveness and reticence, keeping aloof from the ship's company altogether, this was not an easy task. Among my servants there was, however, a renegade Jew, one of those devil-may-care, light-headed fellows to whose impudence and forwardness nothing in this line was too difficult to accomplish. So I set this man to work, with promise of a goodly reward for early and complete information. How, I never learned, but he soon insinuated himself into the good graces of his former co-religionists. The strange and ever-alive affinity and sympathy among the race no doubt facilitated and readily served his purpose, and within a few days he was able to impart the following information :

The young man was a widely celebrated rabbi by the name of Solomon ben Isaac, known everywhere among his people under the abbreviation of "Rashi." He was now returning from a pilgrimage of penance, made through Southern Europe. His father Isaac, long since dead, had been the owner and possessor of a priceless jewel. The Christian prelates of his native town, Troy, in France, demanded surrender of the valuable stone to be used as an eye for a Madonna-image of their cathedral, offering a fabulous sum therefor. Rather than have the jewel used for such a sacrilegious purpose, the old man fled on board of an outgoing ship. But the priests were too quick and sly for him, found his refuge, followed him out to sea, took him prisoner, and threatened him with death if he did not instantly

surrender the coveted prize. Then the pious Jew, to whom this was a matter of conscience, before his captors could prevent it, flung the treasure into the waters of the sea. By actual calculation it was found that at the very instant of that fanatically heroic act "Rashi" was born, and a common report among the Hebrews of Troy relates that a voice was heard by the Sanhedrin seated in that town, saying: "The new-born child shall be the lost, but thus recovered jewel to his people." However, the father grieved to such an extent over his lost property that soon thereafter he was gathered to his ancestors. Now the son, who is already a miracle of learning and profound erudition, to atone for the impious regrets of his sire, has vowed the redemption of his paternal sin by a long and tedious journey, from which by this ship he returns to his native place and family. He is engaged in and has now nearly completed a commentary on the Pentateuch. It is an immense work, with which he designs to establish a literary reputation among his Hebrew co-peers, and, if the judgment of the elder Israelite may be trusted, it will be the astonishment, delight and admiration of all who know the sacred text, and will become immortal unto unborn generations. His eyesight being impaired, the young Jewess acts as his amanuensis, but, in spite of her intelligence and great knowledge, as she writes down the sentences which fall from his lips, one can notice the unmistakable surprise and astonishment in consequence of the master-genius elucidating facts and truths never before so known and taught.

The older man is Parnass, *i. e.*, the president of the Jewish congregation in the German city of Trier. His name is Rabbi Chisikiah, one of the merchant princes of the realm, esteemed by Jew and Gentile for liberality, benevolent disposition, honesty and

straightforwardness of character. His greatest treasure, however, is the only daughter now by his side, the apple of his eye, renowned far and wide, not so much for her comeliness, but for the phenomenal mind which had mastered the realm of sacred and profane learning, guided and developed by the most celebrated teachers her ambitious father's bounty could command. Interwoven with these traits, making her almost an ideal character, is a depth of loveliness, a goodness of heart, and withal a strength of will that surmounts difficulties before which many a man would shrink. Hers is the blessing of the poor, the praise of the learned and the love of the whole community, and so they call her "Beautiful Hadassa." Withal she is so young yet, not more than eighteen years, and had never known a mother's affection since she became an orphan at birth. But Rabbi Chiskiah had been both father and mother to her, and the tenderness and affection which exists between the two is like the celestial love of the angels, devoted to their Maker. Father and daughter had accompanied, as a sort of complimentary escort, a large number of rabbins who emigrated to the holy city of Jerusalem, there to end their pious lives, wailing and weeping weekly when the Sabbath is ushered in at the broken-down walls of the temple. The two had travelled as far as Genoa with these friends, and, after supplying them munificently with funds and providing them with all necessary comforts for such a long journey, receiving in return tearful blessings, they now returned homewards, bringing, under their special care and protection, Rabbi Solomon, whom they met at the seaport.

My servant now introduced me to these persons, and several evenings I passed in their company sharing their hospitality. I found the report which

my spy had so dexterously obtained completely verified. During these interviews, when in such close proximity to the matchless maiden, my passion was aroused by her personal loveliness and the magnetism of her mind into uncontrollable desires. Oh, these wild emotions of love—these ever unrequited affections for one whom my soul thirsts to possess! Will my hopes, my fond imaginings for once be realized? As in darkest night there appears in the far-away East a faint glimmer of struggling light, speaking of the coming dawn; so in my gloomy soul, burdened with the self-consciousness of eternal evil, appears this far-away glinting halo, emanating from the most heavenly element in human nature, by whose effect I, the hated wanderer of centuries, at last may be redeemed, and my demoniac cause of destruction and despoiling brought to a peaceable and blessed end, reversing and undoing all the woe spread among suffering mortals. Will it be so? I tremble in apprehension of continued disappointment. All these daughters of Judah through the past ages have invariably spurned with loathing any advances made by me when wooing them. Among no other race of men have I found the feminine sex so clannishly true and exclusive in bestowing their hearts. The men, occasionally, may be wiled away and ensnared into the meshes of some fair Gentile maiden, frequently practicing intermarriage; the women, with isolated exceptions, never! This, to a large extent, accounts for the perpetuity and purity of the sturdy stock, living, thriving and ever prospering amidst the most adverse circumstances. Let me now, therefore, summon all my ingenuity and best tactics in the attempt to win this girl! It will require the most delicate, careful and wary movements to make any progress in this my amative scheme. But I shall leave no power on earth untried to achieve it; then, if I fail—may their God pity her and her race!

I learn just now that immediately on our landing at the port of our destination, the old man and his daughter will accompany Rabbi Solomon to Troy for a short visit before returning to their home. They have invited me to call on them if my way should lead through the ancient French provincial town. My road will certainly be in that direction! Until I meet them there, adieu! adieu! For now Marseilles, with grand domes and spires, comes at last in sight. Soon our boat is fastened to its mooring and we land at the dock of one of the finest harbors of all Europe. My friend, Peter the Hermit, will not hear of any separation, but insists that I must accept his hospitalities in the city. So we depart, arm in arm together, to his cloister lodgings, followed by my servants, who attend to our luggage. We bring up at one of the most magnificent abbeys of the Benedictines, covered with ivy and moss. The Superior receives his confrere and guest with the well-renowned cordiality practised among the members of that fraternity. We feel comfortable and at home at once. The days which I have spent among these ecclesiastics, humble, wealthy and ever content, belong to the happiest and most enjoyable of my long and troubled career.

PHANTASMAGORIA XIII.

THE FIRST CRUSADE.

All Europe, especially the Western portion, was soon aflame with the rugged eloquence of the new prophet, Peter the Hermit. Clad in the coarse woolen garb of his order, barefooted and bareheaded, seated upon the back of a scraggy donkey, he could

be found among the gaping multitudes, calling upon the people who streamed to hear him, to prepare forthwith for the delivery of the Holy Land from the hands of the hated Saracens. Alternately praying, preaching, lamenting and weeping, beating his breast or raising his hands in imploration to heaven, he so affected his hearers that the watchword, "On to Jerusalem!" was on the lips and tongues of everybody, and spread over the continent like wildfire.

The church aided the fanaticism. The immense upheaval of the masses for a religious movement attached the millions closer to her bosom. Thereby, as calculated, she gained power at home as well as placed a strong barrier against the Ottomans in the East. From each altar and pulpit resounded the praiseworthiness of the wild enterprise; absolution was promised for every past sin, and salvation proclaimed to all who should join the army of conquest.

A bright red cross worn on the shoulders was made the emblem of the followers of Peter, and they called themselves henceforth "the Crusaders." The women became equally enthusiastic with the men. Matrons and maidens were busily employed in furnishing the insignia for husbands, fathers, brothers and lovers, and in getting them ready to march at the earliest possible time.

The governments also helped on the movement. Kings were not yet willing themselves to lead the undisciplined legions, but considered it the better policy to encourage by all possible means the first riotous ebullition of their subjects. If the prospective effort to conquer the Holy Land succeeded, the princes could easily assume command; if it failed, they could disavow any official connection with the invasion.

At the urgent solicitations of my influential ecclesiastical friends, I, Ben Beor, received permission

from his majesty the King of France to enlist men and means in the country, with headquarters at Troy. Thither I proceeded without delay, rousing the farmers, tradesmen and merchants to the highest pitch of excitement. The plow was left idle, the workmen abandoned their tasks; the master mechanics, craftsmen and apprentices, all threw away their tools and left their shops to join the great army.

Such a commotion, such a popular uprising had never been known before. It was a moral epidemic, growing and increasing as it spread, seemingly destined to overwhelm the continents. The exciting cause of becoming champions for Christ and His church was increased to fever heat by the rumors which I had industriously spread, of the immense wealth and treasures possessed by the unbelieving Mussulman, awaiting the conquerors.

Among all this uproar and excitement I did not neglect my private affairs, however. I made it my first business to find out the abode of my Jewish friends whose acquaintance I had made on shipboard. I found Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac with his family and two visitors, located in the centre of the Ghetto, the Jewish quarter, his dingy house adjoining the ancient synagogue. I presented myself at the door, which opened to my knocking, and was ushered into the presence of my former acquaintances; received cordially as an old friend, contrary to the usual wary precaution of the Hebrews, exercised generally in admitting strangers to the inner circle of their homes.

Who would have thought, on entrance to the dust-covered and cobwebbed reception-room, that after traversing a narrow, almost subterranean passageway, there should be found the splendor and princely oriental wealth which adorns the inner recesses of the

gloomy abodes of these cringing and apparently poverty-stricken Hebrews? The apartments were not high, but the walls had been magnificently frescoed in the finest intaglio style, with scenes from the Old Testament, the figures being life-size. The light falling from above showed the rich colors, resembling most artistic enamel. The apartment where the family generally assembled after the daily work was done and on Sabbaths and festivals, was especially rich in all its appointments. Magnificent candelabra hung suspended from the glinting and glittering ceiling. The well-placed furniture was of most costly material and workmanship. Everything bespoke style, refinement and unstinted wealth.

It was Friday evening when I was ushered into the company of my old friends and acquaintances. Besides these, who seemed exceedingly glad to welcome me, there was the mistress of the house, the wife of Rabbi Solomon, a stately matron and ideal picture of a mother in Israel. Seated beside her was the youngest daughter, the only one at home. Two older ones, being married, were away with their husbands in distant cities. The girl, whose name was Mirzah, had a very ordinary appearance and was small in stature. At first sight there seemed something repulsive in her make-up. Lovely Hadassa held her by the hand, and the contrast between the two became almost shocking to me. How often are we poor mortals deceived by appearances! Reluctantly, but for politeness sake, I spoke to the girl. Imagine my surprise and astonishment when she, whom I fancied scarcely worthy of the companionship of such cultured and educated associates, proved to be the consummate master of them all. Learning and wit flowed in unbroken succession from her lips, and as the fire of enthusiasm kindled her eyes, the whole features underwent a change, making her sublimely

fair. It was the finest mental display when these two young women discoursed on some of the most abstruse and casuistic questions, spurred on and directed by their elders, who seemed delighted in this brilliant display of Biblical and Talmudic learning. Thus were we entertained until called to partake of a sumptuous supper. The arguments continued upon our return from the dining-hall to the reception-room. During their highly interesting and exciting conversation I noticed an unmistakable restlessness on the part of the two girls and their parents. It clearly betrayed that they were anxiously awaiting the arrival of some other guests. Too soon I should learn, to my sorrow, that I was not mistaken in this my observation. At last we heard a knocking at the outside door, and all of them, with exclamations of joy, were instantly on their feet, as if ready to proceed to the entrance. Rabbi Solomon, however, waved the others back, motioning them to keep their seats, and, followed by the father of Hadassa, proceeded to the outer door to receive the newcomers.

Soon they re-entered and brought with them two persons of most remarkable appearance. One was a very aged man, certainly beyond three-score and ten, a hunchback of repulsive countenance; long, white hair flowing down over his shoulders. He walked with an immense gold-headed staff in one hand and leaned on the arm of his companion, a young Hebrew of nearly colossal proportions. The younger person was certainly not less than six feet tall, broad-shouldered, and with stature and countenance imposing and majestic. The most remarkable feature of his appearance was the broad forehead, made prominent by a circle of short light-brown curls, and a long beard falling over his chest. The new guests were then introduced to me—the

older as Pasha Irim, an Ottoman grandee, the king's banker at Paris, and Monsigneur Alfonso Simon, his associate. A few words spoken to me shortly after their arrival stunned and overwhelmed me, and I underwent tortures of anger and jealousy when, in the course of the evening, the young Frenchman was presented to me as the accepted lover and betrothed of Hadassa. I had to witness the cordial intercourse of these parties and the genuine affection which undeniably existed between the pair. To be in his place I would have sacrificed ambition, hatred, revenge and future.

But this was not to be. The fatal course of events is, as it seems, forever to goad me on irresistibly to the ever-continued work of my malicious mission. The company must have noticed, too, the sudden change in my behavior. I concluded this from several questions addressed to me by one or the other person—queries which evinced anxious curiosity. Pretending some sudden indisposition, I soon departed, receiving their sincere regrets. Declining politely their urgent proffers to see me home or have some of their servants accompany me, each bade me good-night with a warm shake of the hand. After pressing invitations to call again at my earliest leisure, and accompanied by Rabbi Solomon, who led the way to the door, I departed, vowing to myself that all my disappointments should be visited with fiercest venom on their heads, and that the consummation of the union of the young couple should never take place, if I had to murder them all. In this mood I arrived at my quarters. The night which I spent was, no doubt, the most terrible and agonizing in all my life's experience. Heated by maddening jealousy, my blood leaped like fire through veins and brain. I walked the floor all night, talking incoherently to myself and gesticulat-

ing wildly. It must have made me look like a maniac. When at last the first dawn of morning peeped through the window, I threw myself exhausted on the bed and fell into a deep but troubled slumber, from which I only awoke near noon next day. My servant had entered several times, but, as he explained afterwards, finding his master so sound asleep, dared not to arouse me.

When I had opened my eyes I felt composed and determined to act systematically. First, I found out during the day the position the Jews held among their Gentile neighbors. This proved to be exceptionally friendly. The Frenchmen are by nature kindly disposed towards all people. That gross prejudice and ignorant barbaric fanaticism so prevalent among other nations, is a stranger to them. This cordiality was greatly enhanced by the blended social and commercial interests of the inhabitants. A large exportation trade in home manufactures was carried on by the Hebrews. They gave employment to the laborers, mechanics and people in general, treating them always liberally. Destitution was unknown; comfort and well-doing was a leading feature among the entire population of this municipality. For all that the Christians here would have cared, the Jews might have torn down the walls of the Ghetto long ago. This had actually been proposed by the liberal Catholic clergymen who resided in this parish, and would have been carried out but for the episode which occurred concerning the jewel in possession of the rabbi, and which was coveted, as related heretofore, by the church, for adorning a Madonna. I was satisfied that an emeute between the members of the two religious denominations was here entirely out of question. Nor would that have helped me in my present dilemma, since I learned on the very next day from my apostate servant that

Rabbi Chiskiah and Hadassa had already departed for their home in Germany. This wily renegade had found favor with one of the young maidservants in the house of Rabbi Samuel, and through her, with his usual tact of spying into other people's affairs, had been informed that the marriage ceremony of the newly-betrothed couple was appointed to take place at the home of the Parnass about one year hence. So I had at least plenty of time in which to act. Solution of my difficulty came, however, partly from another direction. While traversing one of the main streets of the city the next morning, my attention was attracted by a sign suspended above the door of a business house, which read:

PASHA IRIM & CO.,

BANKERS TO HIS ROYAL MAJESTY.

I entered on pretense of having to transact financial business, and found old Irim deeply engrossed, counting stacks of gold which lay piled up before him. His partner was absent. A glance at the man would satisfy any observant beholder to what extent he was wrapt up in the absorbing occupation before him. His soul and his gold seemed to be blended into one. Would it not be possible, I reasoned with myself, seeing this embodiment of avarice before me, to work upon his cupidity so as to lure him, by large sums, to help me, that his associate should forego the alliance with Hadassa and co-operate with me in taking the place of the lover? I resolved to make the trial with this inveterate miser. After a cordial salutation, which became absolutely cringing on his part, I stated the nature of my business, producing a warrant for an immense sum of money on the king's exchequer, which I proposed to deposit with him and make the firm agents for my large financial transac-

tions. He smiled broadly, rubbed his thin, bony hands together in great satisfaction as he stated the usurious terms on which this must be done. In a tone of pleasantry I remarked during the conversation that I would willingly give the whole amount were I in the place of his young partner relative to the beautiful daughter of Rabbi Chiskiah. He looked again at the paper with that horrible grin which showed the inward workings of a greedy mind, shaking his head with great efforts. At last he spoke: "Would you indeed give it?—give all this for a woman? Fools that we men are! picking out one girl from the thousands—stake everything for that one—everything—money and life, as if all were not the same—bundles of caprices and whims, spenders of our hard-earned treasures, triflers with the hearts and affections of us stupid males. You shall have her, my friend—you shall have her at this bargain! or my name is not Pasha Irim. I'll manage it with my Alfonso—you shall have her. You will sign this paper, and he shall sign the contract. As far as I am concerned you shall have her. Take her with my good wishes of good luck and blessing. The match would have cost me too much anyhow—two hundred thousand francs! as if it were a trifle. My boy will make some words—some hard words, I expect, but he has always obeyed me, and he shall mind me now—shall! I say,—shall! Come back to-morrow by this time and all will be arranged—I will find him another and cheaper kallah (bride)." I took a receipt for my draft and departed, not without apprehension of the ultimate success of my cunning stratagem.

It seemed to me almost impossible that a young man, with the ardent affections which he held for his affianced, should, at the command of his venal

senior, sell out his heart's love for a sum of money. It certainly appeared against all human nature. My prognostications in this matter proved too true. Returning towards evening from the camp where my legions of Crusaders were growing to immense proportions, impatient to be led on towards our goal, there was a great commotion over the city. An excited crowd was gathered in front of the banker's door. I was forthwith informed of the cause. The old man had suddenly died with a stroke of apoplexy. Loud and angry words had been heard inside by some passers-by; then piercing screams and cries for help followed, and the doors were suddenly thrown open. Out of these young Alfonso rushed forth, imploring some of the bystanders to run for medical aid, as his partner had fallen into a deathly swoon. Doctors came immediately, but found the banker lifeless and cold in death. On my arrival home I found a letter which had been brought at noon by a messenger from the banking office. It contained my warrant, with the most insulting and offensive epithets from the lover, throwing my vile proposal in my teeth, and threatening, if I ever darkened their door again, that I should be spit upon and kicked out. The insult and disappointment raised my anger to a high pitch, the like of which I never had experienced before. "Vengeance!" I cried; "vengeance, cruel and unprecedented, on the whole miserable tribe, but most overwhelming revenge on this haughty Jew, his affianced, and their hapless friends!"

Nothing could hold me any longer in Troy. Next day every preparation for moving onward with my cohorts was made. These louts had agreed upon a token and signal which should precede us on our march. They selected a goose and a goat to precede as vanguards of our forces. While travelling

the stupid fowl was carried by a fantastically arrayed old beldame. The frisky quadruped was led by a shepherd-boy, clad in the peculiar mountaineer fashion.

As we moved on, the bird quacked and the goat bleated. Thus the rabble marched away towards the German borders. Soon we reached the Rhine and crossed it. Our ranks swelled from day to day by newcomers of the lowest and the vilest kind. They threw themselves upon the hamlets and villages, pilfering and ransacking every hut and house on our road. A stupefying terror seized the defenseless inhabitants, losing their little all, made houseless and homeless; they readily listened to the preachers, of whom we had a superabundance, one more fanatic than the other. The robbed German peasants fell into line with the French marauders, who had also been joined by a similar mass coming from Flanders. Ribald songs, swearing and cursing, fighting over food and spoils, mad carousing, and wild orgies of lust and debauchery were the order of the day. The horrible crowd turned into uncontrollable savages, ever ready for deeds of wanton violence and bloodshed. Whoever resisted was assaulted and often slain. The murdered corpses lay plentifully in our wake, rotting and unburied, a prey of the birds and beasts in the fields.

Soon I added new fuel to the ever-increasing flames. As we approached the city of Trier (Treves), the first of any magnitude on German ground, where, it will be remembered, was the home of Rabbi Chiskiah and his envied daughter Hadassa, I kindled a new thought among our monks and clericals; giving out by them to the drunken multitudes the password, which flew through the lines like lightning: "The Jews," who are as much the enemies of the Saviour as the unbelieving Mussul-

man, ought to be converted to Christianity, willing or by force. If resisting, let them suffer utter annihilation from the face of the earth. Why not commence, then, the veritable crusade right at home, beginning with the hated, rich Hebrew heretics? The frenzy of the already over-excited, sanguinary rabble knew no bounds at the immediate prospects of havoc among an entirely unprotected and friendless class, who by the nature of their forced occupation as traders, merchants and financiers, had the misfortune to be the rich creditors of high and low, and while forbidden to own a foot of land on European soil, and barred from every profession and trade, they became, notwithstanding, the possessors of great wealth. This they generally converted into precious jewels and valuable gems. In case of emergency and dangers, always hanging over them, these could easily be carried away. Necessity being the mother of invention, these shrewd people had lately devised a most ingenious method of exchange, by which the temporarily oppressed and persecuted in one land or province were enabled secretly to ship their possessions to more secure places, ever relying implicitly upon scrupulous integrity among themselves. Defalcation or breach of trust is not on record throughout all these troubled times, it being the special charge of the ever watchful and faithful Rabbins, who were clothed with high judicial authority, to guard the interest of their brethren in faith. Such was the beginning of the banking system, by which soon the whole monetary transactions of the civilized world were to be operated. These were the new ramifications against which I now had to combat, foreseeing clearly that the accursed race, by wealth, if not timely checked, must become in not far distant time as peerless a power as was the state and church. Many a time I have pondered

upon the difference in my position, had I been one of them and used my strength and labors in the amelioration of their condition. But this was not to be! My maledicted fate forbade such hallucination.

So onward I marched with my wild followers. A strange, inexplicable superstition was prevailing throughout their ranks in reference to the two grotesque animals who ever led our van. It was given out and firmly believed that the Holy Ghost had descended upon them, and they were divinely inspired to lead the way successfully to the goal of our mission. Passing the goose or the goat, everybody made the sign of the cross and recited thoughtless prayers, while counting the consecrated rosaries.

The monstrous mob resembled now the fabled Dragon of the heathens, who, as was said, devoured every man and beast coming into reach. Our approach had been long since heralded to the city. I had caused some mounted couriers several days previous to proceed thither, and especially instructed them to inform the already demoralized inhabitants what we intended to do with the Israelites. These people were struck with awe and terror; and as usual, when such calamities were upon them, had recourse to their houses of prayer, humiliating and prostrating themselves before God, weeping and fasting; not neglecting, however, to take care of their treasures and valuables. Calculating that in this hour of great tribulation, any sacrifice would be made by them, no matter how vile and exacting, by which the impending fate might be averted, when a few hours distant from the walls of the town, I proceeded alone in advance of my legions, and sought the house of the Parnass, Rabbi Chiskiah. It was at an early hour of a beautiful spring morning. I found him and Hadassa just ready to go to the syna-

gogue. They were much dejected, and the girl was in tears, looking to me more handsome and entrancing than I had ever seen her before. They recognized me, and I heard the old man, in tremulous, half-loud accents, murmur the well-known quotation from the book of Job: "And Satan too was among them!" Then he continued to speak loud and ask firmly: "What is the object for which thou comest here now? We know thy treachery against my daughter's betrothed, and that thou hast been the indirect murderer of his aged patron. For what other evil dost thou come to us in the time of our affliction?" I was barely prepared for such a brusque reception; but seeing that all was known here, I stated the proposal which I intended to make. "Since you are informed of all this, you must now also be aware what is in store for you and your people. Yet it is in my power to avert the coming massacre. And I will do it on one condition. I pledge you my word with my life, if you accept it now, not a Jew shall be hurt in this city. Give me the hand of Hadassa, I love her madly, devotedly! I will make her so happy and so rich that she shall become the envy of crowned princesses. Refuse me and I will have her by force; and exterminate every man, woman and child of your people. Choose ye now quickly!" "Son of Belial!" he cried at the top of his voice, "we care neither for the blessings of Balaam nor do we dread his curses. If our God wills to save us from the hands of the wicked, He will send us His messenger of help; if He in His providence has decreed that we must fall, we will know, like our martyred ancestors, how submissively and proudly to die! So get thee hence at once, and do thy worst!" After hearing this, I felt sure that remonstrance was futile; and fully determined upon my future course, I left without another word, rejoining my impatient companions, now at the

gates of the city. "Forward," was my command, and like panting tigers they threw themselves upon the town. I led the way to the Ghetto. Ten thousand maniacs followed in my wake. Before we could enter its gloomy precincts, we had to pass the celebrated bridge which spans the turbulent waters of the river Moselle, and which had been built many centuries ago by the invading Romans. As we approached the towering structure, we saw gathered upon its centre a large number of young females. I recognized the foremost in their midst as being Hadassa. On our approach, she was the first to hurl herself headlong over the ramparts into the raging flood. All the others followed without a minute's pause. At the top of my voice I cried out: "Save them, rescue them!" A thousand men flung themselves into the seething waters. They were too late! Long before they could reach them, the sinking bodies had disappeared in the rushing caldron which the river forms at this spot. How many of my own men perished in this attempt I never learned. We hastened on to the synagogue. From far away we heard low chants, sounding like the chorus of the dying. The entrance was strongly barricaded, and gave way for our entrance only after continued work with axes and sledge-hammers. Horror held us spellbound at the opening! The whole antique-looking space, lit up with wax candles, showed the entire congregation in the last gasps of death.

Upon a raised "Bihma" stood the hoary-headed, silver-bearded Rabbi. He and Parnass Chiskiah held long, blood-dripping knives in their hands. They were loudly chanting. I distinctly heard the words always pronounced by dying Israelites. The Parnass had his white shining breast bared. As we hurried towards them the aged Rabbi plunged his knife with fearful certainty into the heart of his companion,

who fell dead at his feet, and then with one more effort dealt himself a fatal blow, after which he tottered forward, exclaiming in his fall down the steps before the sanctuary the last gasping words, "Adonoy who elohim! The Lord alone is the true God!"

In the centre of the sacred edifice, on top of a table-like structure, there lay a vellum record, the title-page of which was inscribed, "Memor-Book of the Jewish Congregation of Trier." On the last page was written the unanimous resolution of the assembled body. They had concluded to die by their own hands rather than to fall into the cruel power of their enemies. As I yet was perusing the names and numbers of these people, who heroically indeed sacrificed themselves to death rather than submit to forcible baptism, some of the wretches in our train had set fire to the premises, and in a few moments more the raging element drove everybody to hasty retreat. A heap of ashes, cinders and blackened ruins of a once magnificent ancient structure was all that remained of the heretofore opulent congregation of Trier.

The hurricane thus let loose over the city swept over all Southern Germany. Its destructive force was soon experienced in similar manner among the Hebrew communities in the prosperous and peaceful cities of Speier, Worms, Cologne, and the whole district bordered by the rivers Rhine and Main. The details of its devastation during the ensuing prolonged Crusades, the ever-spreading force of destruction, belong to the historian, who must write the tear-stained, bloody annals of those times. Its full extent and pitiful sufferings of the countless victims will never be known until the last trumpet shall call the wantonly murdered to testify for final judgment on their brutal butchery. If this persecution set in motion could only be accelerated by

some more fanatic and lasting motive-power, one that would commend itself to the rude understanding and superstitious herd of common humanity; one that was not of the effervescent nature, spurting away by the present momentary excitement; one which could be used effectually forever, provided it had in it the elements of use with the ignorant, then might indeed my sanguinary hopes be realized at no distant day, to see the total extermination of that cursed race which had been, and as I was sure would in future be, the main obstacle in the way of my mission.

Meditating upon such a plan, I consigned my present leadership of the migratory upheaval to other hands and wended my way southward, escaping unobserved from the noise and tumult of the crazed and blood-drunken crusaders. After a pleasant journey through the vine-clad hills along the river Loire, I reached at last the small but beautiful city of Blois, where I intended to stay a short time for rest, recuperation and cogitation.

PHANTASMAGORIA XIV.

THE ORIGIN OF THE BLOOD-ACCUSATION.

The streets of the historic little burg of Blois are narrow, and the houses lining them mean-looking and neglected. Lying on an acclivity, from any point of the city could be seen a most beautiful picture. On the highest point of the ascending grade stands the imposing castle of Count Theobald. The massive pile lends a picturesque finish to the mag-

nificent landscape. Passing along through the main avenue, it being towards evening, I noticed many people in holiday attire, all crossing the thoroughfare at one point. On inquiry I found that they were Jews on their way to the synagogue, this being the eve of the holy Passover feast. I joined the crowd and entered the antique edifice. My Semitic physiognomy ensured me a "Salem Alichum" from the beadle (Shamas) at the door, and I was shown to a seat of honor provided for strangers among the congregation. Then the obsequious old man went up to the official who sat near the ministering Rabbi and whispered a few words to him. After this he told me to wait until the close of divine service; that the Parnass (president) had done himself the honor of inviting me to become his guest during the Pesach feast. As he then left me and proceeded on his further duties, there entered among the many newcomers a young lady of most distinguished appearance and radiant beauty. Everybody made way for her and she was seated opposite me, in the gallery overhead, assigned exclusively for the women. The long chanting, singing and praying, in which the congregation joined, being finished, my host came to me, and with the wish of a pleasant feast (good Yom tov) took me by the arm and escorted me outside. Here we were joined by the maiden whose entrance I had noticed. The venerable president, after laying his hand in blessing upon her head and fondly kissing her, introduced the young lady to me as his only daughter Pulcelina. We then made our way through the lively crowd and soon entered the cosy home to which I had been invited and now was made welcome. The mother of the house had prepared for the customary family services which the Hebrews observe on that evening and which they call the "Sedar." It is celebrated

in memory of the exodus of their slave-ancestors from the Egyptian bondage. It consists of a peculiar arrangement, a home service preceding the evening meal. The unleavened cakes, called "Matzoh," are placed alternately under snow-white napkins at the head of the table. They represent three distinct classes of the race, the Priest, the Levites, and the People. Alongside of these there lies a boiled egg, typifying life immortal; a charred bone of the Paschal lamb, emblematical of the sacrifice of yore; a piece of horse-radish, representing the bitter life of serfdom; some green herbs, to remind that this is the first month of spring; a dish of sweetmeats mixed so as to show by its color the loam in which the oppressed had to labor; a small vessel of salt water, signifying the wants of human existence. A cup of wine is placed at every plate, and one stands in the centre, ready for the prophet Elijah should he deign to come this evening, being expected at any time to announce the approach of the Messiah. These must be emptied four times during the service. How hateful all these reminiscences tugged at my heart, bringing back to memory the events which at the start of my career, buried in the folds of primitive history, had so fatally sent me forth to my doom! When all the arrangements were ready, we sat down, and then from a book which they called a "Hagadah" prayed, chanted and sang the quaint melodies transmitted from ages ago to every member of the tradition-loving tribe. While the peculiar performance was in progress my galled disposition perceived that in connection with the mystic ceremonial an accusation against these people might be invented, which, horrible in its tenor, would find ready credence by the easily swayed, already ill-disposed, ignorant Christians. It was nothing less than the infamous charge that the Jews, for the

complete preparation of these Easter rites, needed blood from the Nazarene believers, and that for this purpose, whenever the occasion offered, they would slay a Christian, abstracting the life-fluid from his veins, and then bury their victim secretly at night. Absurd as the black libel may seem to any one acquainted with the sacred aversion the Israelites have against the shedding of blood, their laws being inexorable in that direction, yet once set afloat, neither this truth, remonstrances nor protestations would ever be able to quell again the hideous, tormenting calumny. If extirpated in one locality, it would rise again, when a pretext was needed, elsewhere with new and terrible vigor. Could these people in their hospitality have known or guessed with what black misfortune they and theirs were to be soon visited through my instrumentality, how they would have cursed the hour that brought the stranger to this fireside.

Soon after supper there came a visit from Count Theobold, who honored the house frequently with his august presence. I noticed then the motive that attracted him hither. It was beautiful Pulcelina, with whom he was in love. He had contracted early in life a "mariage de convenance" with a noble lady, as is the usage with the aristocracy. The wife proved to be a perfect gorgon, and made his life in the castle a hotbed of contention and quarrels. He had met the young Jewess, was attracted by her fine appearance and sweet, lady-like ways, and offered her such ostentatious attentions that dame Rumor soon got hold of all, whence it reached the Countess, who became fiercely jealous, as well she might, against such a powerful rival.

During the course of the evening's conversation, the Count remarked that one of his best grooms had left him that day, and he was anxious to replace him

as soon as possible with a good man. I stayed in the house for two days till the feast was over. Then, with the liveliest gratitude for the munificent entertainment which had been so kindly extended, I departed on a pretended journey. They bade me a cordial farewell, with the invitation, whenever I should come this way again to make their house my home. Totally disguised, I presented myself, however, shortly after at the castle, and giving the Count a fair story of myself and good account of my ability as a hostler, I was forthwith engaged. From the servants, with whom I soon fraternized, I learned that there existed a great rivalry between the Count, our master, and the general-in-chief of the city government, for the favors of the beautiful Jewess. She had, however, spurned the advances of the general, who on several occasions had been impertinent to her, and of which she complained to the more favored Count. Harsh words followed between the two would-be lovers. The mean nature of the general turned into hatred towards the girl, and he had publicly vowed that at some future time he would be revenged on the whole race of the Jews. I could not have wished affairs more favorable for my plans. A few days after entrance upon my menial service, I rode one of the Count's spirited horses to water at the river. Another rider had preceded me. It was a Hebrew, who wore a white waist-jacket under his great-coat. My charger shied at the unwonted appearance and refused to go near the water. This incident gave me fair material for fabricating my story, which I recited to the general, who just then passed that way and inquired of me what was the matter with the horse. I stated to him that I had seen the Jew who preceded me throw a corpse into the river. The Israelites, celebrating now their Passover, needed Christian blood for their Easter cakes, and had without doubt

murdered somebody for this purpose. The instinct of the horse made him refuse to touch the water, and then, trembling with fear, he had reared so wildly that he nearly threw me out of the saddle. Nothing could have been more welcome to the already angered official than this plausibly concocted report. He made me at once accompany him to the castle and there report before my master what I had related to him. Count Theobold gave orders for the arrest of every Israelite in the city, about forty persons. Pulcelina and her parents were alone excepted. Criminal process was immediately instituted, charging them with the imputed crime of murder. The accused victims, knowing the fearful dilemma to which this consigned them, placed all their hopes upon the great influence of the fair Pulcelina. She would certainly plead with her friend the Count, and see to it that justice be done; that their innocence of the cruel charge might be established, and that they soon would be set free again from their imprisonment. But I was determined that they should not have this satisfaction. The Countess was secretly informed of the exception made in the arrest. She raged with anger and jealousy, and then succeeded in the quarrel which ensued, in making her husband swear that under no pretense he would see or listen to the hated girl. The nobleman's love of money came very near exculpating the accused. They were requested by a confidential messenger to state what sum in gold they would give for their freedom. Consulting with some Christian friends, they offered two thousand and eighty pounds, all these poor people possessed. At the point of accepting this, a fanatical priest mixed himself up with the impending trial, and submitted to the Count that such a crime must not be handled lightly; on the contrary, if found substantiated it ought to be visited

with heaviest punishment. But on what evidence were they to be convicted? The only witness in the case was a stranger, an unknown person, but a few days in the service of the Count, a menial, who might tell the truth, or have invented mischievously the whole story. So a test was proposed, considered infallible in those days. The judgment of heaven was called in to ascertain the veracity of my testimony. A boat on the river was to be filled with water. In this I was placed, and the people of the town assembled on the river bank. Then the little craft was let go, to be carried down by the waves. If it sank with its load, the witness had lied, and must perish; if it swam and remained floating on the surface, the truth was established by decree of Providence. Nothing was easier for me than to stand the ordeal. As the vessel was shoved into the middle of the stream, I balanced its weight and position, so that it could not but move on with the velocity of the element. Waving my hat to the jubilant masses, I sailed gallantly down, and the evidence was fully established—the Jews had committed the murder. My friend, the priest, had seen to it that no more water was put into the hold of the trial-boat than would cause it to sink but a few inches below its usual draft. This hocus-pocus performance cost the lives of the entire Jewish population. In vain did Pulcelina try to gain admission to her friend and patron. Watched by the Countess, he refused to see her. In her indignant anger she tried to pass the guards and force her way into the castle. Now she was arrested and by main force dragged to prison, to be incarcerated with her co-religionists. The exultant, victorious Countess sneered at the unfortunate girl as she was forced away. By order of Theobald, the entire number of the Israelites were consigned to be burned. Before the

faggots were kindled, the pious priest called upon the doomed people to abjure their religion and be baptized; that in accepting this their lives would be spared. But not a single craven was found among the number who would, in turning apostate, escape from certain death. Three celebrated scholars, Zechiel ben David, Zechiel ben Juda, and Juda ben Aaron, were selected as the first to be executed. These were bound to the stakes and fire applied. The flames, however, singed only the cords with which they were bound; they tried to escape. Three times the executioners forced them back; they were consumed to ashes. Thirty-nine men and seventeen women followed their awful fate, while chanting the confession of their faith, by a prayer which they called the "Olinu." This happened on the 11th of May, 1171. The news of this horrible catastrophe spread quickly over the land. When it reached the city of Troy, a synod of the French Rabbins was here in session, ruled by the renowned Rashi. The Martyr-massacre was instituted forthwith as a day of lamentation, fasting and mourning, to be observed in Israel forever. And well they may so celebrate it! For of all the terrible cruelties heaped upon the Jews during the past ages, none were so freightful of calamitous consequences as this first Blood-Accusation, born in the city of Blois. In conclusion, it need but be reported that the great light of this time, the learned, wise and philanthropic Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac, died a few days after the bloody event. The horrible cruelty against his innocent, defenseless brethren is said to have broken his heart.

When the first excitement in Blois was over I thought it best to absent myself from the loathsome scene where the blood-accusation against the Jews had its birth, and move over to Germany for the further prosecution of my task to trammel the

people and uphold the thrones and churches by inventing there some still more powerful agency for my evil purposes.

PHANTASMAGORIA XV.

BLACK BARTHEL.

Far away in the most northwestern part of Germany are the Hartz mountains, dividing the waters of two fine rivers, the Weser and the Elbe. The highest point is the Brocken, a spur nearly 4,000 feet above the level of the sea, overlooking all the surrounding country. The formation is of feldspatic granite, which by its easy decomposition has caused the majestic cone to assume a rounded, graceful form. Its gloomy and weird appearance had secured already in earliest times the notorious reputation of its being the seat of evil spirits, giving rise to the folklore that here was the devil's kitchen, whence came at midnight of the first of May all the witches and wizards, mounted on he-goats or broomsticks, to hold their infernal annual revelry. It is more than likely that some base heathenish orgies, carried on here in the darkness of night, gave rise to the myths which pass current and are perpetuated by the mouths of the superstitious and credulous peasants and miners.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century there stood at the foot of the imposing crag an old abbey, covered with ivy, one of those grim and ghostly-looking cloisters wherein the Franciscan monks held themselves aloof and secluded from the outer world. It was known that here was collected one of the finest libraries in existence, especially rich in

valuable vellum manuscripts. It also contained an extensive and well-stocked laboratory, where members of the fraternity continually and industriously experimented with drugs and chemicals. At that time ecclesiastics were exclusively the medical practitioners. It was currently reported and believed that they also indulged in alchemistic processes and the black arts, searching for the "stone of wisdom" and the "elixir of perpetual life." Many-colored vapors had been seen at night to rise from the quaint, wide-mouthed chimneys. Belated laborers asserted having heard strange and unearthly voices after dark. If persons were compelled to pass here on nocturnal errands they would hasten tremblingly until far out of sight of the dreaded place, but most people preferred to take circuitous routes leading to their valley homes in order to avoid the haunted neighborhood. One of the monks stood in very bad and awed repute with the easily impressed and prejudiced populace. The lank and slim stature of the brother, enhanced by the particular garb of the order; his wan and austere visage as he peeped with small, piercing dark eyes from under his cowl, frightened the common people when he sallied forth now and then among them, forever muttering to himself. His name was Berthold Schwartz, but he was called throughout the district "Black Barthel." Nothing was known of his early life. He came here from Franconia, bringing to the abbot letters and credentials from the superior of the order, who recommended him as a profound and studious friar, desirous of availing himself of the renowned facilities stored in the home he sought here. The cell apportioned to him, adjoining to the right the library and to the left the laboratory, with doors leading to either, was the scene of his regular vigils. Poring over the profound tomes or yellow

vellum rolls, he would now and then rise, either pacing the narrow floor, or hurrying to the bookshelves, returning with an armful of volumes and manuscripts, or he would hasten to the dimly-lit vault where piles of crucibles and experimental paraphernalia were stored. Then he would be seen engaged often till daylight in mixing and stirring the chemical stuffs, while the perspiration stood in drops upon his broad forehead. Thus he was occupied once near midnight when a great catastrophe nearly ended his life and the existence of the abbey. For years the idiosyncratic idea had possessed him of inventing a combustible compound of such high explosive power as on ignition to throw missiles with irresistible velocity. War, as it had been carried on until now, was simply a series of single-handed combats, with victory most always on the side of superior brutal force. Bows and arrows were indeed in use, yet their cumbersome weight, the skill required in handling them effectually, and the quick expenditure of the barbs made them most undesirable weapons in fighting a battle. Incited by a casual discovery in some old archives, this monk by incessant efforts tried to re-discover what he thought to have been once a well-known but now totally forgotten art of scientifically preparing the ingredients. He knew well by long meditations and calculations what ponderous revolutions such a destructive agency surely would work in behalf of the governing powers, the strengthening of whose hands meant at all times also the propping of the Catholic altars. Waking or dreaming, the object of his ambition was before his eyes. Every disappointment or failure in his never-ceasing experiments only fired his blood and mind to new efforts. Year after year he had spent thus far with research, study and practical tests. In this memorable night, how-

ever, his prodigious labors should at last and unexpectedly be crowned with final success. As the chapel belfry sounded the hour of twelve he sat before his long table with numberless books and parchments open before him. They all treated of that same subject with which his mind was filled. Absorbed in deep thought, the whole material once again passed in review before his memory. On a table lay this memorandum, extracted from the various sources of historical collections:

1. The Chinese, about 80 A. D., had obtained knowledge from India concerning a certain powerful explosive.

2. Julius Africanus describes vaguely its preparation, in the year 215.

3. Callinicus of Heliopolis introduces Greek fire to the Byzantines about 668 A. D.

4. The Arabs used fire-arms against Mecca on or about 690 A. D.

5. The Emperor Leo employs such in the year 811.

6. Marcus Gracehus, a Greek author, describes an explosive mixture, 846 A. D.

7. Leo, the Philosopher, makes rockets for the army of the Eastern Empire, 880 A. D.

8. King Solomon of Hungaria bombards Belgrade with cannons, 1073 A. D.

9. In a battle near Toledo, the ships of Tunis shoot "fiery thunder," 1083 A. D.

10. The Greek ships used artillery against the Pisans in the year 1098 A. D.

11. The Tartars employ "fire-pipes" against the Chinese, 1232 A. D.

12. Don Jaime throws into Valencia fiery balls which burst, in the year 1238 A. D.

13. Seville is bombarded with artillery, 1247 A. D.

14. Damietta was defended against St. Louis with bombs, 1249 A. D.

15. Albertus Magnus, a monk, is said to have invented "bombardam barbardulam et scolpum manualum," 1280 A. D.

16. A fire-shooting cannon is placed in the arsenal at Amberg, Bavaria, 1303 A. D.

17. The Spaniards have artillery and use it before Gibraltar, 1308 A. D.

18. Henry VII bombards Brescia with "thunder guns," 1311 A. D.

19. The Arabs have cannons before Baza, 1312 A. D.

20. Martos is attacked with artillery, 1326 A. D.

The last instance is only four years ago; for it is now the division hour of the end of April and the beginning of May 1330. A fearful storm prevails outside. Incessant heavy rain clatters with hideous noise on the roof. Sheets of lightning and terrible peals of thunder vary with the howling, whistling winds, raging down from the cloud-capped mountain into the valley wrapped in Egyptian darkness. All this passes unnoticed by the unconcerned monk, whose whole attention is engrossed, as if enchanted by his absorbing speculations. All at once he rises and runs with eager steps to the laboratory. He quickly lights the astral lamp which hangs from the ceiling, and which now sheds a ghostly yellow flame over the dusty, smoke-begrimed and cob-webbed premises. Then he lifts the big iron mortar and carries it to the pedestal in the centre; the burden of heavy weight taxes all his strength. Now he brings the pestle and puts it in its place. Next he hurries to different jars placed upon the multifarious shelves, takes them down and weighs out from the contents certain quantities, such as he has marked upon a sheet of vellum which he holds in his hands. First a quantity of nitre carefully measured; to this he adds a less amount of sulphur. Rubbing these

up carefully in the mortar, he now pours in some charcoal, and manipulates these ingredients into one compact and congruous mass. As he bends panting over this exhaustive process, suddenly the whole area is lit up with a ghastly sheen, by a stray bolt of lightning which strikes stunningly into the mortar, shattering it and its inflammable contents into myriads of atoms, hurling the dazed monk unconscious to the far off trembling wall, and shaking the whole massive structure as if it were a spinning-top whipped by the hands of a mischievous urchin. To the hapless friar, sitting recumbent against a heaving column, it seemed as if some supernatural power had dealt a fearful blow upon his bursting skull. Visions of most horrible and terrible phantoms pass in quick and staggering succession before his dilated eyes:

Mountains of bleeding and mutilated corpses; piled-up stacks of quivering, moving limbs; cracked skulls covered with squirming brains and shooting rays of blood; millions of agonized human features in the last throes of death; widows wringing their hands over their heads in wild despair; little orphans with pinched, starved features, prostrate on their backs, glaring imploringly with their lusterless eyes to heaven; ravaged farms with the harvest of the year trodden in seas of mire, while the buzzards and ravens hover over the carcasses of slain men and beasts; flaming, burning, smoking cities, whence the pallid, fleeing and despairing inhabitants fill the air with the sobs of the women and children and the cursing maledictions vociferating from the maddened and despairing men; armies swaying to and fro, now jubilantly victorious, intoxicated with success; now howling and crazed in dismay by being beaten to flight and annihilation; now nations in drunken exultation kneeling in brutal victory upon the necks

of their foes; now the same overthrown, mangled and shackled in chains and expiring in defeated despair. As all these move before his vista in gory procession, amidst deafening noise and clash of battle, at last a gaunt-looking, hollow-eyed woman, with disheveled hair flowing wild in the wind, her arms pinioned at her back by chains, her hands grasping a broken sword, upon the rusty blade of which stands in faded letters "Liberty," is led with a rope tightly bound around her emaciated waist, by a figure resembling Black Barthel's own features and form, wearing instead of the cowl and garb of the friar a blood-red mantle and brandishing an executioner's axe, while around him dance demons and goblins with horrible gesticulations and mad capers, all screeching: "Accursed! Accursed! and thrice Accursed!"

The alarmed brotherhood came running in and found him amidst the chaos of destruction, lying mangled under the debris of the fearfully effective explosion which had taken place but a short while ago. Carried into the fresh air, and with careful nursing, he was soon brought back to consciousness, and after a while restored to health. But the terror that should make such indiscriminate havoc and hurl such deathful misery upon the future human world was born, and its author, with results and influences written with blood and tears in the pages of history, went into the shivering world to reap his baneful triumphs, which ultimately should achieve and complete the appalling business of "Black Barthel," alias "Ben Beor, the Wandering Gentile."

PHANTASMAGORIA XVI.

THE FLAGELLANTS.

Section I.—How Strasburg Became Free.

Gunpowder had been invented! It was soon to prove one of the greatest agencies of despotism. Crowned heads, potentates and governments were now everywhere engaged, but especially on the European continent, in introducing this new explosive. Each watched the other to ascertain which should make the quickest progress and provide the largest number of weapons for its use.

All former standards of national strength were useless. Now a child might slay a giant, and the weak might rival the strong. Other matters seemed momentarily and universally suspended, even those of importance were overlooked and for the time being set aside during this engrossing commotion and unprecedented activity.

Yet this very period became so awful in its aspect by the accumulation of untoward, terrible circumstances as to defy all human efforts either for its relief or amelioration.

Contrary to every expectation, this was not to transpire through the newly invented agent, but by two forces, one of natural origin, the breaking out of the "Asiatic Pestilence"; the other by my undying, ever-increasing hatred, striding on in the blighting, sickening wake of the all-consuming epidemic. Both threatened the extinction of church, state and people, irrespective of position, wealth or religious differences. It happened in this wise:

Eight armies had at different intervals, under historically renowned leaders, with ever-shifting results, carried on as Crusaders the monomaniac

idea of conquering the Holy Land, extinguishing Mosleism and substituting Christianity. These efforts, ever futile in the end, had depopulated Europe of some of her most robust and powerful elements. Nay, when the Crusaders were at their height, the very children, a juvenile army with no other weapons than shepherd's crooks, proposed to annihilate the cursed Saracen. Led by some blinded elder enthusiasts, they perished by the thousands, as the woful annals of the horrible "Children's Crusade" record in the year 1212. It sapped even the future possible recuperation, by the destruction of a large part of the rising generation. The immediate results of such a wanton upheaval stagnated all agriculture and industry, blighted commerce, trade and art, changed prosperous nations into a horde of vagabonds and reckless paupers. It consumed the substance and inheritances of princes and nobles, who in the splendor of their accoutrements and the number of their followers spent large sums. These, in order to raise the ever-requisite funds, pawned their family plate and mortgaged their estates to the Hebrews. That indomitable race, in possession of money accumulating in their provident and cunning hands, remained at home, though repeatedly assailed, persecuted and murdered by the crazed mobs, and not unfrequently brought to the very extreme of utter annihilation, yet they managed to re-establish themselves better than ever before after the comparatively short interval of not quite three centuries.

Especially fortunate was the condition of the Jews in the city of Strasburg, on the borders of France and Germany. I passed through there on my way to Italy. To my amazement I found here a condition of things which, on account of the wide extent of prejudice between the Arians and Semites,

seemed nearly incredible. The strongly pronounced qualities of the slow but thoughtful Teutonic character were here finely blended with the more vivid and sprightly nature of the Latin races, dwelling together peacefully and amicably on the beautiful left border of the Rhine. To these were added a comparatively large proportion of the Hebrews, who had found here at the earliest time of their dispersion undisturbed and prosperous homes. They mingled freely with their tolerant fellow-citizens, contributing many peculiar traits of thriftiness, industry and domesticity to the tone of their surroundings. The malignant influences of clannishness, prejudice and hatred were strangers to the cosmopolitan spirit permeating all classes of society. General prosperity, contentment and progressive growth were the leading chords harmonizing the hum and bustle of the life of this splendid city. For many years the people had been ruled by a kind of dual government. The "Dome-Capital," presided over by a "Cardinal-Bishop," possessed full power over all spiritual and educational affairs, and exercised a limited supervision over the municipal departments. As owners of one of the finest and most renowned cathedrals of the world, endowed with rich and plethoric incomes, the church required hardly any tithes from the citizens. Following a religious and political policy which was neither oppressive nor intolerant, the course of events, as far as this part of the rulers was concerned, rolled on smoothly and satisfactorily. No rupture of any consequence occurred for centuries. The civil part, called "La Mairie," was elective, and consisted of a president, titled "Le Maire," and two members named "La Commune."

The reigning prelate, Monseignor de Berthold, had, however, lately changed all these former peace-

able conditions. The second son of a princely house, he had been in earliest youth, by hereditary custom, assigned to the ministry. The tendency of his whole character would have fitted him better for any other than a holy calling. Worldly, sensuous, impassioned and crafty; gross in his appetites, ill-humored and treacherous, he possessed not a single quality creditable to the high church position which was procured for him by his all-powerful relatives and friends. The wise and temperate policy which had been so favorably pursued by a long line of his predecessors, was entirely ignored and set aside by the young man. Intrigues and schemes to increase his power and wealth followed one another. The sacred shepherd's crook, the ecclesiastical bishopric-emblem, changed into a tyrannical rod, dealing cruel blows upon his helpless subjects. Nothing prevented his overriding the ancient rights and privileges of the communality but the sturdy and unbending determination of the "Maire," Conrad de Winterthur and his two worthy associates, Gosse Sturm and Peter Schwarber. The choice of the people could not have fallen upon more faithful and sterling servants than these three representatives, tried and proven in the hours of great peril which would have overwhelmed the good city but for their unselfish devotion, zeal and patriotism.

In the ensuing struggle between the priest and the community I managed to take a peculiar part. On the day and the hour of my arrival I found the street lined with people, following a grotesquely gotten-up funeral cortege. The hearse was drawn by a couple of diminutive donkeys draped in black, each with a little cap fastened to the ears. Every step caused the tinkling of small bells which ornamented their headgear, also very profusely distributed over the fringed seams of their mourning attire. A

coffin, striped black and red, bore a cap similar to those on the donkeys' heads, only much larger and ornamented with gilt embroidery. The casket contained the dead body of the bishop's harlequin, whose premature demise had taken place but a day ago. A long train of acolytes in their altar garbs followed, and the procession closed up with an official herald, who cried out, "Our fool is dead—who will be a living fool?" It was certainly the funniest and yet the saddest exhibition I ever witnessed, and numbers of the lookers-on must have been impressed with the same idea, for while many mouths were seen with broad grins, yet tears flowed at the same time from the laugher's eyes. I hastened away, but next day presented myself in the most grotesque attire before his Eminence as a candidate for the vacant position of his jester. After having given eminent proof of the agility of my limbs and the versatility of my tongue, I was readily accepted and quickly installed as the official fool of his Right Reverence the Cardinal Bishop of Strasburg. If ever I was in right position for mischief and evil, it was in the new career which opened now before me. I became a constant and indispensable attendant at the priest's palace, and by my inexhaustible fund of wit, satire and humor kept the light-headed prelate in an almost continual roar of laughter. Pandering assiduously to all his baseness and vices, cunningly I contrived many kinds of intrigues for his insatiable lechery, led him into low sorts of escapades and adventures, thereby becoming soon the envied, all-powerful, confidential favorite among his clerical subordinates and numerous lay-servants.

Often we would wander in disguise through highways and byways in search of some new love-intrigue, none of which was too bold or too criminal

for my master. On the contrary, the more outrageous our proceedings, the more spicy it proved for his coarse and ever-craving appetite. On the last of these expeditions we chanced one evening to pass the house of the Chief Magistrate. The balcony was lit up by a flood of light, streaming out from the profusion of lamps burning within. An old crone, no doubt the mother, was sitting upon a rustic settee by a youthful maiden, both engaged in earnest and animated conversation. I punched my companion playfully and jovially in the ribs and exclaimed, "Here is meat for your sport!" He seemed perfectly beside himself, and gazed and gazed as if he might swallow the unexpected sight with his glaring eyes. "A thousand ducats!" he cried out at last, "if you get me the prize, and a thousand more if you bring her to me without much delay!"

I vaulted over the palisades and stood bowing and scraping before the much astonished and frightened females, and unhesitatingly addressed myself to the old dame: "I beg your thousand pardons for the rude intrusion, but my master and princely lord has just now dropped right here before your door a ring, an heirloom of priceless value. Despite of all our search we have not been able to find it. He stands yonder in great despair and uneasiness for his loss. Might we beseech you to order some of your servants to come out with lights and assist us in recovering the valuable jewel?" Scared as were the ladies, audacious as were my proceedings and as was the excuse, the women soon became composed, and the daughter spoke out first. "To be sure, dear mother, we cannot deny so reasonable a request; let me call the porter and coachman to help with their lanterns to search for the missing ring." She had risen and was about to call the servants, when there was

heard a great noise and commotion from below, and forthwith a crowd of officers of the law, led by an old Jew, rushed from within to the balcony, dragging my patron a prisoner to our presence. They were closely followed by the master of the house and a host of angry citizens. I was bound and shackled. Lights being brought, we were unceremoniously and rudely divested of our disguises. Imagine the surprise and consternation of the crowd to behold in the captured suspects their Cardinal Bishop and his clown. Here was a cruel revelation. For some time criminal acts of the lowest and most aggravating type had been secretly committed during nightfall, not unfrequently in the heart of the city. The perpetrators had not been discovered, but public indignation rose to fever-heat. In this emergency a band of detectives were secretly established. At their head stood Courad de Winterthur, aided by his two colleagues. They called into requisition the assistance and services of a trusted and widely-known friend, the Hebrew banker Lionel. He had distinguished himself greatly on previous occasions for his fine detective traits, being, notwithstanding his many years, shrewd, quick in understanding, tireless in every effort, and watchful with an exhaustless patience when once his energies were aroused. A number of the leaders and their companions had been assembled on this very evening at a favorite public wine-hall, unostentatiously but conveniently located in some obscure part of the town. Here they were eagerly discussing the all-engrossing subject of their mission, when suddenly the Hebrew, who faced the open window, sprang to his feet and pointed to two figures, who just flitted stealthily at a great pace by the house. "Follow me!" cried the excited old man, and in an instant the whole crowd, without any noise, issued

forth in pursuit of the strangely-moving rovers. To their astonishment, the way led right to the chief magistrate's residence, and from a convenient nook they not only observed the movements of the unsuspecting intruders, but overheard every word of their conversation, ending in the remarkable sequel of the capture of us the surprised miscreants.

His Eminence, with the most crestfallen, sheepish-looking countenance, asked to be permitted to return to the cathedral residence, and promised all and everything if given our freedom. But the citizens would not listen to his entreaties nor enter into any compromise. They escorted us to the Mairie. As the strange procession moved through the streets, lit up by the torches of the ever-swelling crowd, the report of our capture spread quickly through the city and a storm of revolution broke forth with such fury as to threaten our lives. But we reached at last our destination in safety, were ushered into some of the upper chambers, and locked up with the authorities. The clangor of the bells, ringing soon from every steeple, brought forth the "garde nationale," and these received orders to take charge of and protect the public building. Part of the mob that had soon congregated surged and raged here, clamoring for the surrender of the captives; part hurried to the Bishop's palace, sacked it and liberated some of the immured female victims, who had been from time to time kidnapped and had mysteriously disappeared. Our trial lasted till morning. I pretended to be the principal malefactor. In this I was stoutly seconded by my abjectly cowed confederate. But we both being under no other jurisdiction than that of the Church of Rome, they agreed to my perpetual banishment from the city and the waiving of any further investigations of the terrible scandal, on condition of the absolute abdication now

and forever of the Dome-Capital's secular power, authority or vested rights in the government of Strasburg, which henceforth and for all time to come was to be declared a free city of the realm. Such had been long since the effort and ambition of this community. It was all agreed to, signed and sealed. At daybreak the great bell of the Mairie was rung, and soon the people were assembled in front of the place. Here the proclamation was read to the multitude, and the charter of their municipal liberty accepted by them amidst wild shouts of joy and approval. A safeguard was then given to his Eminence to bring him safely to the cathedral; another was appointed to escort me over the boundaries of the town. We left amidst the groans and hisses of the masses, but monseignor, no doubt, as well as myself, considered that we got off lightly from the ugly predicament.

Thus ended the first episode in the fearful drama that was shortly to be enacted here, as well as in all parts of the European continent.

Section II.—The Pestilence.

From where my tormentors left me, I proceeded slowly and gloomily southwards. My mind was cast down with the exasperating reflection that every effort which I had made thus far for achieving the goal of my ambition, to hold down the people in ignorance and serfdom by the powers of tyrannical governments and the domineering, mind-enslaving bigotry of the Church, was always frustrated in the end by the same agency of the ever-meddling, refractory Jew, with the teachings of his cursed "Forah."

From these bitter, aggravating reveries I was awakened by the approach of a seemingly endless crowd of noisy revellers, clad in the most varied and fantastic garbs, males and females, adorned with a

profusion of leaves and clusters of grapes from the vineyards. They were celebrating their annual feast of the vintners, having finished the work of gathering the wine crop, and now making a jolly harvest-holiday, to compensate themselves for the arduous labors of the past season. Preceded by drummers and fifiers, they sang, shouted and gambled like a merry band of children. When they reached me, they crowded round and pressed me into their midst, adorning my hat and vestments with the same ornaments, leaves and fruits which gave them such a gladsome appearance, insisting that I, like every stranger whom they should meet this day, must join their bacchanalia. Readily consenting, I was introduced to another of their guests whom they but a little while ago had impressed into their lines. He was an old, weather-beaten, battle-scarred, invalid soldier. On coming to a halt for midday refreshments and rest, my companion-traveler told me his story.

He was a native of Strasburg, had joined the last army of Crusaders some years ago, after endless adventures and countless troubles, and after the last and final defeat of the Christians in the Holy Land, joined a band of returning marauders, who eagerly sought to make their way back to the old fatherlands. Driven by the closely pursuing Saracens into India, they had fallen in with a long procession of Mussulman pilgrims, who returned from the holy "Caaba" of Mecca. Exhausted from fatigue, hardships of all kinds, and exposed to the deathly miasma and exhalations of the pestiferous river Ganges, mortality was, and is as usual with them, very great. Hundreds of the afflicted died by the roadside, and remaining unburied, exposed to the sweltering heat of a tropical sun, added greatly by mortification which set in, to an ever-increasing dreadful and

fatal epidemic. As a matter of precaution for their personal safety among these fanatics, they thoughtlessly appropriated some habiliments of the Arabian corpses, and thus disguised as natives, followed undetected among the benighted wanderers. At last they reached the boundaries of Europe, where they left the Mahomedans, glad to part with such stolid fellow-travelers. Soon they separated also, taking the different routes to their nativities. "Alas! dear friend," he continued, "I had not traveled far when the stunning report followed me that some of my companions, after reaching short distances on their way, fell, overcome by the dread disease which they unquestionably had contracted a little while ago, and died most horrible deaths among strangers. The worst feature in these pitiful cases consisted of the fact that the people who charitably had aided the sufferers coming among them, caught the infection. It spread with a malignity and unprecedented speed unknown in the annals of medical science. All the Southern provinces of Russia, Austria and Italy are now one great lazaretto. The physicians stand helplessly by, unable to stay the contagion or relieve the sufferers. The people die by the hundreds and thousands. I deem myself exceptionally lucky for having escaped thus far the dread infection, but must own that for several days I have not felt well, and this morning was barely able to proceed on my journey, when I was encountered by these joyous peasants. The excitement and novelty of their proceedings held me up. I am now no longer able to move on. God alone knows what is to become of me; I feel so weak, drowsy and confused."

We were sitting on a rustic bench, such as line everywhere the French and German highways for the accommodation of tired travelers. When he ceased speaking his grizzled head sank on his half-

bared breast. I quickly made room for him, and rising, assisted the sick man to stretch out on the vacant place. As I bent over him his breath came heavy and thick, his bloodshot eyes became glassy and glaring, protruding from the sockets. His wan face turned livid and then red with fever. Great drops of clammy perspiration stood on his forehead, and convulsive twitchings gave his whole countenance an unearthly appearance. At my request, he, with a painful effort, opened his lips and showed his tongue. It had an unnatural, chalky-white color. He begged for some water, gasping that he was burning up inside. There was no mistake about it; I recognized the awful symptoms from my former experience; it was the dreadful Asiatic plague. Curiosity and the so often fatal desire to render help in cases of such emergencies caused the people to crowd and press upon us. I cried out to them to keep away, warning all that there was deathly danger among them, overtaking surely such as would insist upon approaching nearer. But none would heed until they had viewed the stricken victim. Then one after the other fled, until none were left but the village priest and the burgomaster. In counseling with me what was best to do under the terrible circumstances, I advised that they should procure a vehicle and send the dying man without delay to the not far-off city of Strasburg. They engaged a wagon from an adjoining farm-house, losing as little time as possible. The poor fellow was made comfortable on a litter of straw. Before the driver started on his errand of mercy, I drew a piece of vellum from my coat-pocket, and with a pencil of black lead wrote the following message to his Honor "le Maire" of the free city of Strasburg:

"That you may not think your banished servant ungrateful for the leniency shown in his sentence, I

send to you, by the bearer, the token of my thanks. Cherish it as best you and your fellow-citizens may, a gift from the Cardinal's jester, whose true name is 'Ben Beor, the Wandering Gentile.'"

Section III.—The False Accusation.

The two men and my message reached their destination towards evening. The sick person, by this time, was covered all over with hard, dusky spots, each one with a distinct head filled with a dull colored fluid, around which had formed gangrenous sores, forming ugly-looking carbuncles. Every gland of his body had swelled into dark, angry-looking inflammations. He complained of piercing headache; that he felt chilled and restless, and that his limbs were no longer movable. His skin was hot and dry, his eyes red and muddy, and his tongue had changed color from the dead-white to a glistening black. The authorities sent him quickly to the hospital, where, shortly after his admittance, he died in the hands of the physicians. These were greatly puzzled concerning the strange malady before them, utterly unknown in their pathological experience. For the purpose of professional inquiry, many of the medical men from the city were called in to pass, by post-mortem examination, upon the disease. They allowed the festering, contagion-breeding corpse to lie exposed for the entire following night and day, and finally agreed unanimously that the subject of their investigations had died from poison. The terrible consequences of this criminal carelessness and ignorance were revealed in a very short interval. In a few days the city was under the horrible spell of the relentless contagion. The sick, the dying and dead were everywhere. Doctors, apothecaries and grave-diggers were in demand incessantly, working

at their sad occupations with hardly any respite. Not unfrequently they themselves were struck by the pitiless disease and fell dead by the side of others. Strange to say, the driver of the vehicle who brought the first victim to the town escaped from the black demon of destruction. On returning to the village he reported the often-experienced freaks of the epidemic; that all along the road where he had traveled, although no one had come near him, there was barely a house spared by the fatal attack of the unknown sickness, and that in many instances whole families—the old and the young—fell victims to an untimely death. The villagers, too, soon became prostrated, and one after the other lay down to die.

I stayed here long enough to procure for myself a change of habiliments. This proved of considerable difficulty. The local tailor, a slow and uncouth fellow, had to make each by piecemeal, and, after finishing a kind of cassock, occupying several days, he too was taken sick. I left and made my way hurriedly towards the boundaries on the road leading into Switzerland.

All along through my journey and everywhere there occurred the same appalling sight of the dying and the dead. The calamity was augmented, if this was possible, by continuous wild reports of the spread of the pestilence, which grew into monstrous proportions. Nothing could exceed the spectral sight of men, with their carts and wagons, moving ghostlike from house to house, gathering silently the coarsely made coffins containing corpses of many persons not longer dead than a few hours. It was rumored that in instances there were some shrived while yet alive. Piled on top of one another, these were dumped into one common, hastily made, shallow grave; covered up by the hirelings with indecent speed and coarse jests. Funerals and burial-rites had long since

ceased. During the rage of the insatiable plague, by the instinct of self-preservation, all human feelings, all social and charitable relations, all bonds and ties between relatives and friends became extinct and utterly abandoned. On the appearance of the dreaded symptoms, known soon by everybody, children would flee from their parents; fathers and even mothers rush from the houses when they perceived their little ones attacked by the malady. All distinctions between the rich and the poor ceased to exist. Money and its value had no longer purchasing powers. The fangs of destruction were fastened indiscriminately upon the prince and the beggar, the high and the low, the priests and the laymen, the young and the old, the strong and the weak. Only one class, by common and exasperating report, escaped to a most remarkable extent the all-blighting ravages of the infectious curse. Everywhere it was noticed, and became visible to the enraged, half-crazed masses, that the Jews enjoyed to a wonderful degree immunity from the fatal pestilence. But they were soon to suffer for this phenomenal fact, otherwise and with cruel fatality.

By this time I had arrived at the beautifully located French border village Villeneuve. It looks like a garden, surrounded with evergreen hills, forming vineyards, set off picturesquely by innumerable arbors of prune and apple trees; while the quaint-colored cottages, strung out in broad avenues, each standing in the midst of flower and vegetable gardens, gave it the appearance of an idyllic paradise. Only in the southern outskirts stood a cluster of shabby-looking houses, separated from the rest by high walls. This was the quarter of the Hebrews.

Near this secluded spot I found, after much trouble and many inquiries, a place of shelter with a very old woman who had a spare room and was glad

in her loneliness and straitened means to find a guest. She was entirely ignorant of the general calamitous suffering that had befallen her neighbors, living isolated and unconcerned of what was going on in the outer world. Being hard of hearing and of very bad eyesight, people were not accustomed to trouble her with many visits; and, although she was aware that something unusual and exciting was transpiring among the townsfolk, she did not care to make particular inquiries, and the sufferers had no time nor inclination to communicate to her any of the sorrowful details.

The reason why I desired to tarry in this somewhat out-of-the-way place was this:—I learned, while coming hither, that several governments, in conjunction with the ecclesiastical authorities, had appointed a commission to investigate here a fearful, wide-spread rumor concerning the origin of the pestilence. It was charged everywhere that there existed among the Israelites all over the continent a foul conspiracy to exterminate the Christians by poisoning the waters of the rivers, the wells, drinking fountains and cisterns. Foolish and crazy as this wild accusation should have appeared, yet the excited and frenzied state of the people grasped at anything amidst the disorder and lawlessness, upon which to spend their pent-up wrath, caused by misery and despair. No one could have been more eager than I to foster the damnable illusion, visibly pregnant with the worst consequences to the maligned suspects; and therefore was firmly resolved to take a hand in the coming persecutions, which hung like a dark cloud in the horizon. Affairs soon transpired in my personal concerns which prospered my outrageous designs.

I needed some more clothing, and was directed by my landlady for the procurement of the same to the

"Ghetto," where, as she stated, there lived a widow, Madame Bellieta, and her son Aquet, who kept a complete store of men's wear which they brought from Paris. Thither, then, I repaired. To my agreeable surprise, I found in the proprietress a comparatively young, buxom and comely woman. Her son, a youth, was, however, one of the lower type of his people; dark, long-nosed, shrewd and obsequious. I was soon suited, and to their surprise paid without disputing the price demanded for my purchases. The son carried the goods to my quarters, and while he was away I entered into a lively conversation with the sprightly and affable widow. On inquiry, I found that they have had but few sick and only one death up to this time from the pestilence in the Ghetto. Pressing for an explanation of this curious phenomenal fact, she made the following statement:

"We Israelites observe strictly the Mosaic dietary laws. By these we abstain entirely from the use of swine's meat. Unquestionably, this plentiful source of our Christian neighbor's food contains largely the germs favorable to the spread of any contagious disease. No less do we most scrupulously exclude blood in any shape from our victuals. This is, perhaps, another of the principal reasons of our continued good health. Animals killed by our officials are only permitted as food if physically sound. For this purpose the lungs and vitals, especially of any beef-creature, must be carefully and scientifically examined and pronounced in a healthy state, before the seal of approval for the sale of the meat is placed on the carcass. Every drop of the life fluid must be separated. Our women, as matter of precaution, leave meat before cooking an hour in salt, and again in water. Besides these, other precautionary measures are taken, especially in times of danger, to keep our habitations and streets as clean and pure

as it possibly can be done in our narrow and crowded surroundings. This, and many other sanitary matters, inclusive of the most unselfish care for the sick and the prompt burial of the dead, are entrusted to the charge of a benevolent and powerful society, a leading branch of the congregation. It is called 'the Chevrah.' The men form its main body, but the women are united in an auxiliary band, and even the children are associated with these for charitable labors. Every case of destitution is relieved at once; watchers and nurses are provided by day and night for the sick, and nobody ever shirks the sacred duty of attending promptly to the burial of any one dying in the Ghetto. As a last reason for our certainly great immunity from the plague, is the assiduous care, unremitting watchfulness and almost superhuman devotion of our skilled and highly successful Jewish doctors. They have enjoyed, from time immemorial in all lands and climes, a peerless reputation. Kings and princes have summoned them to their thrones; but the common people, from imbibed hatred and prejudices spread by their priests, would rather die than call any one of them into their families for medical relief. Here we have in this village, our own beloved and revered doctor Valavigny, who resides in the adjoining village of Thonon. He comes here daily on regular inspection, and at any time when necessary. We all worship the good old man, whose very smile seems a cure to the afflicted and ailing. At the outbreak of the epidemic in this neighborhood he freely offered his services to the community at large. But his envious Christian colleagues, in coalition with the vicars, so decried his religion and his mode of practice, that he never was called, although the masses die unattended by the hundreds."

On further inquiry whether she had heard of the

ominous, dreadful report against her people, that they all over Europe were in secret coalition to exterminate the Christians by poison, and that such was really the cause and origin of the present all-prevailing fatal epidemic, she answered that her people everywhere had indeed learned of this slanderous and villainous accusation, and that they lived in great and tremulous apprehension of impending danger. "But we trust," she continued, "that the good commonsense of the better portion of the people will see the utter fallacy and entire impossibility of any truth in such a monstrous invention, too maliciously gross for the venomous fanaticism of even the most ignorant. Besides all of this, we are in the hands of our God; He has protected and saved us in all the perils and dangers which heretofore have befallen His chosen nation, and will not now, we fondly trust, abandon us in this hour of our great trials."

As the woman ceased speaking she actually looked grandly beautiful. The excitement caused by her deep feelings suffused her creamy cheeks with roseate tints; her dark eyes overflowed with tears; and as she stood there erect, with hands as in supplication folded upon her finely rounded bosom, methought an instantaneous resurrection of a figure which always lives in my imagination had taken place before my very eyes. She was the identical counterpart of "Merris," the Egyptian princess, my first love.

Under such a spell I grasped both her hands, which by this time had fallen with unconscious grace to her sides, and pressed them with a fervor no doubt entirely unexpected by the wondering woman. I stated to her that myself and friends had great influence with the international commission which was to investigate the current charges against the Jews, and protested in glowing terms that we would do all in our power to protect her and her people.

Her tears commenced welling forth again as she thanked me in artless but most fervent words for these assurances. At this instant her son returned and I made a motion to leave. She invited me urgently to visit her house again and as often as my time would permit; adding that any kindness and protection offered and extended would find the most grateful appreciation. Thus we bade farewell to each other, having met an hour ago as entire strangers, and now parting as warm friends.

Section IV.—Foiled Again.

At least ten days must elapse before the government commission for this district could arrive here for the investigation of the heinous charges made against the Jews, accused of wholesale poisoning the waters of the continent. This interval, as may be supposed, I spent mostly at the house of my new acquaintance, the beautiful widow, Madame Bellieta. I soon observed that the son had taken a great aversion to me, and absented himself on one excuse or the other whenever I visited them. I heard him repeatedly mumble on my entrance, "There comes that hated Goy again." Goy is a derisive appellation for all who do not belong to the Jewish faith. He then would disappear by the back door. The woman, however, looked upon me with more favor; accepted a few trifling presents, selected with great delicacy so as not to appear improper, and she even soon permitted the slight familiarity of my kissing her hand when I came and departed. The flattered vanity of her sex got the better of her judgment. Encouraged thereby, I ventured after a few days to speak of love, and how happy I should deem myself to possess such a woman for a wife. This, however, appeared to bring the widow to her senses.

In language that could not be mistaken, she respectfully but firmly forbade me ever to broach the subject again. "While I, as a widow," she continued, "need not be girlishly squeamish in my dealings with men, and while I have, perhaps indiscreetly, accepted your attentions as coming from an avowed kind protector, yet the thought of marriage has never entered my mind. Were I ever to entertain another matrimonial alliance, there are many anxious suitors among my own people. The memory of my devoted and most affectionate husband is too fresh yet in my sorrowing heart to think of anything but my grief and bereavement. It is strange," she said, now with a sarcastic smile, "that you Christian gentlemen have so frequently a penchant for us Semitic females. In your ardent passions you make very interesting wooers; but when once married, as the few exceptional subjects who ventured on the experiment have generally found out to their life-long sorrow, you prove not the best of husbands; at least not such as we are accustomed to find among our own domestic circles. It is not the difference of religion alone which hinders a felicitous connubial blending, although this too is a great factor and element in the discordant relation between two who are to become one. Love, as a cement that must bring about such a union, rests fundamentally upon the ethical sentiments, interwoven with our being from early youth. These cannot be lightly thrown off, exchanged, or put on at will. But equally in importance, if not more so, are the differences and habits, tastes and surroundings of everyday life, which must become a bar to the happiness in the amalgamation of two distinct races." "Oh, you are mistaken," I cried, and fell before her on my knees. "Let me prove to you that true love can overcome all these obstacles. Be mine, mine forever, and see if I cannot make you the most

contented, supremely blessed sponse who ever rested in the arms of a slavishly devoted companion." With this I sprang to my feet, clasping her violently to my breast, and showering fiery kisses upon her lips and forehead. The woman at first was dumbfounded, and in her surprise did not resist. As soon as she realized, however, the insult to her feminine dignity and modesty, she threw me off with the strength of an enraged tigress. Even my supernatural physical power was no match for her outraged womanhood. With an imperious, contemptuous wave of her hand she pointed to the door, whence, crestfallen, I precipitately made my exit. On reaching the threshold, I, however, turned once more towards her. With clenched fists and fierce malignity of voice and gestures, begotten by irate lust and deepest humiliation, I hissed: "Accursed Jew! revenge on thee and thine! most exquisite and crushing vengeance on the maledicted seed of Abraham for this insult and contumely to me, who might have been your friend and protector." After this I hastily left her, she falling senseless and swooning to the floor.

The loud words and shrieks of our stormy altercation had reached the terrified people of the Ghetto, and I saw them rushing from all directions to the house as I disappeared.

Section V.—The Torture.

At last the delegation for the inquiry into the poisoning conspiracy was fully assembled. By an inexplicable policy, South France was represented by the Cardinal Bishop of Strasburg, my late victimized master, Monseigneur de Berthold. I found him at his temporal quarters. He was greatly surprised to see me. After talking over in the most hilarious manner our recent experiences, I broached

the subject now on hand, not intimating, however, even with a word, my adventure with the Jewish widow. We agreed that during the session of the commission I should remain in the service of his Reverence, but appear in public as entire strangers. We shared with equal ferocity our hatred against the children of Israel, and were determined that they, in one way or another, should be convicted of the wicked accusation and suffer as they never had suffered before.

The ravages of the dreadful malady were now at their height. The terror of the people knew no bounds. They died like flocks of infected sheep. The crazed sufferers looked somewhere and for somebody on whom to wreak their wrath and bitter vengeance. It was, notwithstanding, apparent in the first day's session of the commission that the opinions and sentiments concerning our investigation were greatly divided. The charge on its face was too preposterous to be readily accepted by any number of sane and reflecting persons. As usual, the Hebrews, in great extremity of danger, had found among the hosts of their revilers some warm and staunch defenders and friends. Foremost among these was the venerable, humane Pope Clement VI, who, even with his dying hand, issued a celebrated "Bull" addressed to all Christianity, proclaiming the innocence of the Jews concerning the awful poison accusation, elucidating infallible reasons for the groundlessness and folly of the shameless and malicious charge. He solemnly admonished every priest to shield and protect the defamed people, and excommunicated all who should commit violence against them (Sept. 14, 1348 A. D.). Then, like a beacon-light among the German people who glutted themselves with ravenous instincts on every occasion of an outbreak against the hated Semites,

appeared a few enlightened and humane communities, who, at their own great risk, actively and energetically fought the bloody vandalism of the times. The Burgomaster and the Schoepfen of Cologne, those of the Swiss cities of Basel and Freiburg, but most especially the commune of Strasburg, were the noted leaders in opposition to the common fanatical frenzy. Even the people of Villeneuve were liberally and kindly inclined towards their Jewish neighbors, and made every exertion for their protection.

If anything decisive was to be accomplished, radical measures must be instituted. The first step to be taken was to adjourn the council instantly to the neighboring town of Benfelden, where the whole population, intensely ignorant, lived under the absolute rule of a bigoted priest. I pressed this matter so strongly upon the mind of my patron and friend that he carried it readily with his confreres, and thither we went on the second day.

The next important problem to be solved was to adduce, if possible, some semblance of proof concerning the truth of the imputed crime. For this purpose I had planned the most cunning and cruelly vengeful proceedings in this tragedy. My raging spite against the detested widow Bellieta, her son Aquet, and their boasted Doctor Valavigny, furnished the means for the early accomplishment of this my iniquitous scheme. We had these three persons arrested and brought before the sacred tribunal of the "Fehm," which formed an adjunct of the council. There was not much trouble to have myself appointed chief executioner. Thus it became my official duty to torture our three prisoners into a confession of being participants in the felony charged against their race. Too well I knew the cowardly weak-heartedness of these people when subjected to physical pain. So, clad in the crimson robe of my

cruel office, and with face masked, joined by a number of coarse, brutal-looking bailiffs, I had the prisoners brought into the subterranean chamber of Inquiry situated under the church. Monseignor de Berthold presided; two others of the delegates acted as scribes; several commissioners, actuated by the same vindictive motives, attended as interrogators and witnesses. The village cure officiated as monitor. With his bland and unctuous voice he called upon them, for the honor of God, to ease their consciences and confess what knowledge they had of, and how much they themselves participated in, the foul conspiracy against the members of the Church. "If you refuse, we have means, as you will find to your sorrow, to press the truth out of you. But we rather wish that you, offspring of Belial, should see the monstrous wickedness of your ways and make of your own accord a full confession of your crime. Own Christ, our Saviour, by being baptized in the holy faith and save your miserable lives." The prisoners looked haggard and dejected. After a short and painful pause the Doctor advanced, and bowing to the President, spoke out loudly and firmly: "What I say is for us all. We have committed no crime and know nothing of any conspiracy by our people. We are in the hands of God, whom we worship as 'the One,' and whom we will not deny nor forsake. You may do with us as you dare. Beware that you do not arouse still more the anger of the Almighty!"

At a signal from the Cardinal I now took charge of the prisoners. I handed over the two men to my attendants. They led them to the outer left corner where stood the rack. I took hold of the woman, pushing her onward to the right corner, where, suspended from the ceiling, hung the thumb-screws. On the word of command from me, our horrible work commenced. Before I placed the irons upon

her hands, and while the terrible cries of her suffering companions re-echoed through the vaulted space, I whispered to her: "Marry that stranger whom you have so despisngly insulted and you shall be saved." But she answered tremblingly, yet without hesitation, "Never, no never!" and gave me such a withering look of contempt and detestation that I felt in my innermost soul she had recognized and identified her persecutor. My rage knew no bounds. I had been instructed by the members of the tribunal not to exercise too much force in the attempt to extract confession from the woman, but as I turned the excruciating screws upon the tender flesh of her thumbs, I gave them such a tremendous ugly wrench that I heard the joints of her bones crack, and she issued a piercing scream which will ring in my ears all the rest of my life. She fainted away. I had a sponge drenched with vinegar and cold water ready to revive her. As she opened her eyes, one of the secretaries, who had followed in my wake by power of his office, asked her the usual question, "Will you now confess?" She looked at me terrified and pitifully wild, then cried out, "For God's sake, anything—everything—only take me away from this man!" She was now led back to the interrogator. The others stood there already, pale, trembling and bleeding. They had succumbed after the first few severe punishments at the hands of my powerful helpers. They owned up to everything. The cunning inquiries were so artfully put that they made a cohesive and complete story. In the form of a confession it stated exact responses to the leading questions, asked and repeated by the trembling and apprehensive prisoners. Thus they were made to say in substance the following facts:

"Yes, there was a European conspiracy among the Jews to poison the Christians by the drinking water."

“Yes, it was conceived and sent abroad by Jacob a ‘Paskate,’ the rich banker of the great and ancient city of Toledo in Spain.”

“Yes, they had received some of the poison themselves and used it all.”

“Yes, it came in little leathern bags, and was sometimes of red, black or green color.”

“Yes, it was prepared from the flesh and vitals of deadly reptiles and insects.”

“Yes, this was mixed with Christian blood.”

“Yes, they knew that this day was the Jewish great fast-day of Atonement, and would make oath and subscribe as to the truth of their solemn confession.”

Persuaded by such effective means as were used by the Holy Church, the rack and thumb-screws, which were applied *ad libitum* until the hard-hearted sinners should give over their stubbornness, there was nothing in the catalogue of crimes which men and women would not own to, and the religion of the meek and lowly Jesus practised thus by her stewards was satisfied and convinced by such cunningly extracted evidence.

And so they did make oath, and subscribed with their trembling, wounded hands to the statement on the parchment roll, and then were returned by aid of their tormentors to prison. The convicting document was immediately laid before the assembled delegates. As if to substantiate all the more the horrible plot, there arrived a messenger from the city of Zähringen. He brought with him a curiously fashioned wallet, containing, as was certified by the authorities, the identical poison used by the Jews and taken from some of them while in the act of throwing it into the river. A little of it was given to one of the dogs in the hall, and the beast immediately died, under painful convulsions and with

foaming at the mouth. I examined the stuff closely, and found it to be a clear, metallic arsenic powder colored with a tinge of blood. Stupendous ignorance and arrogance, handmaidens of selfishness, fanaticism and bigotry—hail! ye powers of darkness and mighty allies of the Anti-Messiah, who now hath stirred up the benighted inhabitants of this continent like a swarm of angry demons to rage on earth with blinded fury, under flimsiest pretense and by the merest sham. A child would detect this falsehood against the chosen of the Lord, which should bring upon them fire and sword, even unto despair and annihilation. Under no other conditions had it been possible to raise the ready multitudes, even in the midst of the ravages of the pestilence, against inoffensive, resistless, doomed Israel. Would it otherwise not be seen at a glance that all the existing poisons now available could not affect a single stream for a day to exercise any pernicious effect, much less all the waters in seas, rivers, wells, fountains and cisterns? But the thirst for blood and persecution had been incited to fever-heat. Before the day was over the edict of guilty had been passed by the wise counselors, and death was let loose upon the devoted heads of the hapless victims. True, a few Christian hearts resisted staunchly to the last, but their pleading voices were cried down and became lost in the demoniac uproar. Sentence of death was passed instantly upon the tortured victims. They were doomed to die by fire. In less time than one can tell it, the faggots were gathered, the despairing prisoners dragged to the scene amidst the appalling shouts and derisive cries of the drunken multitude; they were bound and placed upon the pyres, and the flames, amidst dark, heavy clouds of smoke, rose to heaven, devouring the sacrifices, whose death-songs were heard over all the insane tumult of their

butchers. Meanwhile, the proclamation which outlawed and proscribed all Hebrews wheresoever living and found, was officially passed and promulgated, and it was then and there ordered that this decree of extermination should forthwith be published for execution throughout all the realms of the Christian world. With a swiftness unparalleled in the annals of news of those times, the fearful message rolled along to every hamlet, town and city. It transformed Europe into a veritable hell, devouring the lives of non-combatants, men, women and children. Like hungry wolves, sanguinary rabbles would first kill their uncounted victims, and then with insatiable greed possess themselves of the spoils of the killed. History will forever preserve the story of this cataclysm of murder, committed amidst one continual jubilee-cry of "Kill the Jews for the Love of Jesus!"

Section VI.—The Flagellants in Strasburg.

First and foremost in the bath of blood were immersed with pitiful relentlessness a large number of cities, their suburbs and adjoining villages, of southern and middle Germany. Like an avalanche, increasing in impetuosity and swiftness as it rolls along on a path of unbridled destruction, so the mania for extermination against the doomed Hebrews spread the longer it was enacted. It overwhelmed Switzerland, France and England; in fact the whole continent became a scene of brutal, barbarous, indiscriminate slaughter. Nor must it be supposed that the victims everywhere allowed themselves to be massacred without resistance. Made heroic by despair, in many places they armed themselves, and although outnumbered, they fought to death in several instances, inflicting great damage on their foes.

In the old fortress of Mentz they barricaded their quarters, and three hundred of the most resolute men resisted bravely the storming mob. In the fight which ensued they slew over two hundred of their assailants. When they saw themselves vanquished and overpowered, they quickly killed their own women and children and set their houses on fire. Half the city was laid in ashes by the unchecked conflagration. Similarly acted the oldest congregation in Germany, the Jews of Worms. As soon as the dread hour of their extremity had arrived, twelve of their leading officers repaired to the city hall, and on their knees implored the assembled magistrates for protection and pity. This was sneeringly and unconditionally refused. They then drew the swords hidden under their cloaks and massacred every one of their tormentors. Next they fought their way back to the Ghetto and fired the antique synagogue. Instantly the flames spread, consumed the entire quarter and ate their way into the city, most of which was destroyed. In the town of Constance, on the beautiful lake of the same name, the hapless victims were carried by main force to the churches, and there, whether they would or no, baptized by the ever-willing, subservient clergy. One of these new Christians, bolder than the rest of his brethren, on reaching his home cried out of his open window to the gathered multitude, as he threw the quickly-catching fire into his house, "Behold, I die as a Jew in defiance of you all!"

Notwithstanding the reports of similar occurrences which came from everywhere, yet the city of Cologne, the noble community of Regensburg, and stout, stalwart Strasburg held out to the last to keep this insatiate butchery from their doors. I had foreseen such stubborn resistance, but was determined, if possible, to overcome it. I therefore now

counselled Monseignor de Berthold that he should, immediately on his return to the cathedral, spread the report among the inhabitants, especially among the lower classes, that the magistrates had been bribed with immense sums by their protegés. To this was to be added the not altogether unfounded story that the son of the millionaire Lionel was secretly engaged to be married to the beautiful daughter of de Winterthur, and that she was already under instruction by the Rabbi, previous to her joining the religion of her betrothed. The lecherous prelate, in spite of his experience, was still madly in love with the girl, and swore a fearful oath that the accursed Jew should never have her. I assured him that if he would faithfully and successfully carry out my measures I would be on hand with sufficient force to prevent the marriage, and teach le Maire a lesson which would hurl all his pet schemes to the ground. The lustful priest had set himself assiduously to work without any loss of time to have my tales of suspicion spread broadcast over the city, and they worked like a leaven, fermenting the already discontented citizens to the verge of rebellion. Too many of them ached now to get rid of their Jewish creditors, to whom they were largely indebted, and to lay hands on their plethoric coffers. Through the prostrating influence of the pestilence all business had become stagnant, and many families in their bereavement and sorrows suffered actually for the necessaries of life. True, charity tried her utmost to ameliorate these sad conditions, and the Hebrews were foremost to fill her hands with plenty; but when a whole community, previously comfortable and in ease, is thrown by means of circumstances beyond control into pauperism, the most munificent aid by the benevolent must fall far too short to assuage the wholesale suffering. So the city fumed

and panted like the crater of a volcano preceding an eruption.

I have stated that I would come with sufficient force in the city when the preliminary intrigues were fully at work. To understand this promise, it must now be known that a new factor for the time's dreadful calamity had entered the field, which added, if this was possible, anarchy to the already prevailing terror. When the frenzy caused by the Black Death had reached its highest point, a fanatic by the name of Conrad Schmidt made his appearance with a band of violent lunatics, in this crazed neighborhood. He pretended to have received a letter direct from "Jesus, the Redeemer," containing the message of the early second coming of Christ on earth, but that the world must be purified previously by the baptism of blood. He and his followers, naked to the loins, girded with ropes, carrying in their hands heavy leathern scourges, marched in procession through the streets, from city to city, singing lugubrious chants, whipping their bodies till the blood rippled in streams by the lashes; committing, under pretense of making the people repent, all imaginable excesses, perpetrating murder, arson and rapine wherever they went. From the peculiar weapon of torture which they carried they called themselves "the Flagellants."

As soon as I learned from my spies that everything was in readiness at the doomed cathedral-metropolis, I placed myself at the head of that ravenous crew, and on the 14th day of February, 1349, we entered, with hideous noises, in broad daylight, the wide streets of the city. Our coming had been heralded the day previous. Frightful as was our actual appearance, insanely wild as were our demonstrations, yet the rumor spread industriously by our secret allies, the Cardinal and his little army of cas-

socked priests, had largely exaggerated our numbers, strength and doings. Relying upon these, the discontented, angry scum of the town had already on yesterday successfully rioted, and, joined even by the better classes of citizens, partly from fear and partly from selfish desire for their own aggrandizement, accomplished the deposal of "le Mairie" and "la Commune," and selected their own friends and tools to fill the vacated offices.

On our entrance we were joined by vast multitudes of the most varied description. They came, some from curiosity, some from sympathy for our work. Brutality ever runs a mile while refinement advances a step. Like a pack of screeching hyenas, we moved on, shouting at the top of our voices some vulgar refrains.

The tune, a familiar song, was caught up at once by the ever-swelling crowd. Some became so excited that they divested themselves in our presence of their clothes and begged to be flagellated. In this manner our ravenous host of panting lunatics at last reached "La Mairie," shouting hoarsely for the new magistrates. They soon appeared on the balcony. "Give us the Jews! Give us the Jews!" roared the scething mass of demented humanity.

"Take the crucifiers of our Lord! Arrest them!" shouted back the now too-willing officials, who in previous conclave had readily and eagerly agreed upon the dastardly policy of surrendering the unprotected Hebrews.

By one common impulse, under leadership of the fierce Conrad Schmidt, the entire body of the Flagellants moved towards the Ghetto, and within a few hours took its entire population, numbering over two thousand, captive, driving them like a herd of sheep to the open, public square. A kind of a mock court was held over them, at which the city's

pusillanimous magistrates presided. The Jews were pronounced guilty without delay or ceremony, and doomed forthwith to die. Ropes were brought, and the hands of the sentenced men, women and children were bound to their backs. Amidst the unmerciful blows from the knotted leathern thongs, the heartrending shrieks of the tormented unfortunates, the howling and bawling of the naked, bloodthirsty mob, the wretched Israelites were marched to their own burial-ground. Here a pile of faggots was soon erected, during which time the brutal whipping of the Hebrews, now half dead, continued. When all was in readiness they were forced to ascend the rude heap. Fire was set to the pyres. The flames, as ravenous as the murderous hordes, ate quickly the quivering victims, enveloping them in black clouds of smoke, from which they were at last mercifully released by most horrible death. So ended the cruel martyrdom.

While this carnival of carnage transpired I hurried to the cathedral with breathless haste in search of the Cardinal-Bishop. I found him soon in the church. Well informed of all that was going on, he had impatiently awaited my coming. "Let us hasten, if we wish to take our persecutors alive, so away to the house of Winterthur!" We started on a run and arrived there without delay. The doors of the mansion stood widely open. On entering, we found no one there but an old crone. She informed us that the family, in company with their friends, Gosse Sturm, Peter Schwarber and the banker Lionel, inclusive of their families, had left in the middle of last night for parts unknown.

His Reverence was so exasperated at our unexpected discomfiture that he turned livid with rage. He had revelled in the thoughts of despoiling his enemies of their treasures—perhaps their lives—pos-

sessing himself of the long-coveted charms and virtue of sweetest maidenhood, which had ever inflamed his carnal passions. Now the birds had flown. Suddenly I saw him stagger; before I could prevent it, he fell to the floor. Big drops of perspiration oozed forth from his clammy forehead; his eyes became glassy, suffused with blood and rolled wildly in their sockets; his arms and limbs moved convulsively in terrific spasms; foam stood at his mouth, and his breath came heavy and stertorous; he tried to speak, but the words would not come; from the now quivering lips his tongue protruded; it had turned glossy black; as his cramped fingers clawed the ground he essayed by one heaving effort to cry, with a piercing shriek in broken accents, "God have mercy on my soul!" Then he fell back—dead. Monseigneur Berthold had fallen a victim to the pestilence.

The Flagellants, largely augmented by new recruits, soon left the city. I followed them instantly and directed their way to Regensburg and Cologne. The whole course of their journey thither was a succession of debauchery, murder, arson, and every conceivable crime. Drunken with success, nothing could withstand their demoniacal assaults. In their train followed weeping and lamentation. On reaching the cities of their destination they repeated with increased fury the ghastly work of Strasburg. Not a descendant of Abraham was left to tell the story. Their extermination in all these lands was accomplished. I could safely retire, for the present at least, from the theatre of my never-ceasing vengeance on the boasting bearers of the Torah.

These appalling episodes would, however, not be complete without placing on record the final fate which overtook the terrible Flagellants.

Section VII.—Retribution.

As long as the novelty of the exciting sensation lasted, the course of the scourgers was like a mad, triumphal march wherever their fancy led. The stimulant of their frenzy, raised to the highest pitch of nervous tension by the ever-present intoxicating drink, held even the pestilence at bay. For the few stricken ones who fell by the wayside and were hastily buried, thousands of the ignorant, debased and cowed peasants and burghers joined their ranks. They had everything their own way for nearly one whole year. But after the beastly destruction with which they punished resistless Cologne, the Avenging Angel, striding ever surely in the wake of human wickedness, with counterbalancing justice reached them at last and ended their baneful career. They now boldly marched toward the yet peaceful Nürnberg. Now and henceforth the mortality in their ranks became absolutely stunning. The carcasses of the miserable wretches, as they died by the wayside, soon had to be left unburied and lay strewn in their pathway, festering and horribly swollen in the sun. The authorities everywhere had to follow them with spades and pickaxes to become grave-diggers, and now bitterly complained to the reigning Emperor, Charles IV. Another great calamity, ascribed to their marauding terror, came soon in the shape of a threatened famine. The fields and farms in many places had been abandoned and remained untilled and unplanted by their owners, who were far away with the crazed, naked whippers. Food became very expensive and scarce; the old supply was wastefully consumed or destroyed. The better classes of citizens and the powerful nobility grew disgusted with the bloody havoc. The climax of the catastrophe had been reached and the reaction set in.

Once begun, it manifested itself rapidly and strongly. Latent energy, when once aroused and kindled, strides with giant's feet to its ultimate goal.

The first sign of opposition came in the form of an edict sent directly from the Emperor at Vienna to the burgomaster, Berthold Engelspecht, of Nürnberg. It commanded that the gates of the ancient city should be closed to the rebels of the scourge. The powerful garrison, already provided with the powder-guns, were commissioned to help the authorities to disperse or annihilate the murderous mob.

When, therefore, Conrad Schmidt with his hordes arrived and demanded the opening of the locked portals, a herald from the tower bade them depart, as they should not enter the city on any condition. Furious, the foremost of the crowd, with their leaders, threw themselves against the doors, using axes and hammers to force an entrance. They were warned once more, but would not desist. Then the soldiers, who stood ready on the ramparts, sent such a fusillade of leaden balls into their midst that the mob fell back. A second and a third followed, every shot being a messenger of death in the dense mass. They staggered, howling and cursing, not even knowing, as yet, the power of certain destruction used against them. Again and again they pressed forward, the living trampling over the dead. It was impossible for those in the front ranks to retreat, as those in the rear, barely knowing what was going on, held them wedged in by a tremendous pressure. This lasted until the panic became general, when the terrified wretches fled for their lives. More than a thousand corpses were buried next day in the trenches. This, their first decisive defeat, acted as a stunning blow to their courage. Other places, soon learning of the deliverance of Nürnberg, closed their doors also when menaced, and succeeded in

keeping the wild assailants out. Within a month their ranks became decimated to a surprising extent. Death by pestilence, exposure and deprivation was aided by their sudden dispersion through the desertion of the discouraged, disgusted and famishing followers. Untold numbers died exhausted in the high-ways, trying to return to their far-away homes. Very few of these reached there. Most of the pitiful, deluded wanderers perished in the fields and ditches, victims to the black-death. Conrad Smith, with a handful of his disciples, stole the boats of the fishermen on the Rhine and sailed with them to the river's mouth. Here they took passage for England. On their arrival, however, the British people would have nothing to do with a band of crazy murderers, whose terrible reputation had long preceded them. The authorities arrested all, threw them into prison, there to be held in close confinement. They were to be tried as foreign vagabonds and fugitives from justice, dangerous to the state; but before the session of the next assizes arrived, not one of them was left alive to worry the courts. Pestilence relieved the magistrates of any trouble and killed them all.

PHANTASMAGORIA XVII.

TOMASO TORQUEMADA.

Section I.—A Retrospect.

Nearly a century and a half has passed since I (Ben Beor) have taken a demonstrative part in human affairs. Not that I have been inactive or indifferent to events which have transpired, but no radically violent interference seemed necessary for my cause.

The "Black Death" had killed on the continent twenty-five millions of human beings. In its wake followed all the concomitant evils and horrors which such an unprecedented calamity evoked. It seemed as if chaos were to come again. Finally, the epidemic ceased as quickly and suddenly as it had come, traveling southward with increased violence. At a short interval the recuperative power of the Caucasian and Semitic races manifested itself with most amazing virility in all the lands which had been so lately smitten. Mankind breathed free once more. Labor asserted her strength in its revival. Over uncounted hillocks of the graves of the unknown the green sward covered its mantle of beauty and the sad memories which lay entombed beneath. The golden grain as it was garnered brought in the harvest seasons gloriously. Every avenue of industry, every channel of trade, commerce, science and art—all gradually and vigorously revived and grew. Law and order, such as the strong hand of feudal governments was wont to exercise, were established again. But former tyrannical sway now recognized rights and privileges which were never before granted to the nations. Might, the arm of the wicked strong, was no longer always right. The Church, too, after once again opening her doors to fullest swing, became less fanatic and crushing. It seemed that all the relations which men held to men had been mellowed by the softening and subduing influences of a common, great calamity. As in a raging hurricane when the lurid flashes of lightning have ended and the thunder rolled away, when the dark clouds have passed and the winds at last are lulled, the clear, moist air in the reappearing sunshine makes the landscape glisten and glow like a radiant virgin rising from her morning bath, so the world was transformed soon after its

appalling suffering at the hand of the ravaging contagion.

Woe is me—woe is me! after all the havoc, which seemed to realize my highest aims, as soon as the spell of its seemingly fatal depression fades away from the memory of men, I find myself no further in my fondly fostered schemes, but actually thrown back by my opponents' powers. I perceive that there is an underground swell in the ocean of civilization which directs the coming and going of the waves upon which my bark "Oppression" sails and which chases the ship of "Liberty." This has almost escaped from me, steering to the safe port of "Enlightenment!" Yet I will not give up the pursuit. I yet must take her and force the audacious crew to lower their flag, flaunting the hated insignia, "Law!" It is a struggle for life or death!

I am not the historian of the Jews; and only so far as they intrude themselves into the affairs of the world with a tenacity and patient endurance, and only so long as they thwart my aims and objects, do I find myself forced to take notice of them and continue to combat their cursed existence. In our last encounter I believed that they were utterly and hopelessly crushed. Death had fearfully emaciated their number. The few who escaped were outlawed and proscribed, finding, for the time, shelter and existence in caves and the darkness of the forests. Never before had they been doomed to such abject misery and despair; never were they so near the verge of total destruction. And now, strange to say, not more than some decades pass when, as if by providential intercession, they emerge from their retreats. Not of their own volition alone, but actually sought and entreated to come back, and are welcomed by those who had persecuted and smitten them. Their absence everywhere was sorely felt and bitterly la-

mented. The farmers clamored for their earliest restitution, declaring that they knew not how to get along without the Hebrews, many of the Jews being travelling merchants and needful to the peasantry. Tradesmen and merchants were equally anxious for the return of the Israelites, as there was neither life nor progress without their natural ability for selling and buying. The Church itself desired the return of the Jews, deriving from these heretics her best tithes and fat incomes. Still more was the absence of the outcasts felt and their return advocated by the nobility and aristocratic landholders. Heretofore, when money was needed, application could be made to the Jews and the funds were raised without difficulty or great sacrifices. In many instances the whole business affairs and management of estates were entrusted to these faithful servants. Cities and townships which had solemnly stipulated that none of the expatriated should, for one or two hundred years, be allowed to enter their doors, were now the foremost to demand them back. As accountants and financiers they could not be equalled or replaced, and in many cases the wheel of State became clogged and affairs were thrown into sad confusion by the want of the practised and skilled hands formerly employed. It is on record that bishops, cardinals and princes petitioned the Emperor Charles IV. for the return of the Israelites. The French Dauphin Charles, who reigned at that time, actually appointed agents to hunt them up and bring them back.

And they did come back! In an incredibly short time they prospered and flourished as never before. By their wonderful virility their emaciated lines filled up with astonishing celerity, and now that only four generations have passed since the terrible chastisement, they are more numerous and prosperous than ever.

But other and much graver events had taken place which did not permit me to remain idle during this epoch. Inside of the all-powerful Catholic Church, by her own moral and social degeneration, sedition and rebellion commenced to break out, which became the signal for the most fatal and bloody contentions. The shameless corruption and fathomless infamy of some of the clergy at this time became beyond all endurance and proved a stench in the nostrils of the people. Two powerful and renowned writers, the Italian poet, Petrarca, and the French theologian, Nicalaus de Clemencis, were especially instrumental in opening the eyes of the civilized world to that horrible sink of bestial crimes.

The disintegration of the power of religion was hastened by the springing up upon the debris of Time a flower which threatened to overshadow by its strength and healing qualities the moral cancer eating into the vitals of humanity. Reason, so long and successfully suppressed, would stay no longer imprisoned, but burst forth with a primary shoot, which revealed what power there was imbedded in the full germ when once brought forth and permitted to grow unhindered to its full development. Far away in the wilderness of Bohemia the ringing signal of her coming was given, when there arose the sturdy Tzech, Johannes Huss, throwing the gauntlet of free thought audaciously into the face of His Holiness the Pope and the whole system of theology. This humble and obscure priest staggered all Christianity, and with his declarations and theorems drew the torch of sedition into the most inflammable heap, which might have caused a universal conflagration, burning to cinders and ashes the throne of St. Peter. He found at once followers by the thousands, and these were soon massed in threatening attitude against the Church and State. It took all

my strength and energy to ward off the foreshadowed calamities. The new apostle of freedom, relying upon the indomitable force of his cause and the passport of safety granted him by His Majesty the German Emperor Sigismund, foolishly thrust himself into the hands of his enemies, the great Council of Constance. They scorned his arguments, ignored the imperial mandate, and burned him at the stake. This happened July 6, 1414 A. D., as a prelude to much more stirring events with which my baneful career should shortly be visited in another part of the world. I trusted the interest of my affairs to the greatly increased number of my zealous and anxious agents spread all over the continent. After long and profound pondering it became clear to my mind that the three engines, "Drunkenness," "War" and the "Blood-Accusation," would no longer suffice for the accomplishment of my mission. A fourth was needed—the power to kill thought. To attain this purpose I laid my plans well and bent my steps southward.

Section II.—Medicæval Profundity.

There was a strange scene enacted in the old Dominican convent of St. Stephen, situated in the centre of the ancient Spanish city of Salamanca. This cloister was the seat of one of the oldest and most renowned universities of the world. At one end of the great academical hall were seated, on a raised dais, arranged in semi-circle, the eminent professors and celebrated students of astronomy, geography, mathematics and other branches of science. With the exception of a few private persons belonging to the nobility, the larger majority were high clericals, monks and friars, all arrayed in the peculiar garbs of their orders and ranks. Most of them were old and

hoary men. In the centre of the group sat the presiding officer, the Reverend Bishop of Avila, Ferdinando de Talavera. At the long tables, placed on the ground floor, were a number of scribes, busily recording the proceedings. All these persons were assembled here by special command of their majesties King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, the all-powerful sovereigns of the Spanish Peninsula. They were entrusted with the arduous task of investigating a theory, entirely novel and startling, concerning the shape of the globe, and the assertion that on the other side of the circle there existed undiscovered lands, leading directly to India and the gold countries.

There stood now before the assembly a Genoa sailor, certainly a remarkable man, both in stature and appearance, who had propounded these strange discoveries. He had just finished his statement and arguments before this learned conclave. Exceeding six feet in height, full and robust in proportion, animated by a wonderful enthusiasm of conviction, with a brilliant flow of oratory, the fire of his eyes and the heightened color mounting his olive-tinted cheeks gave him semblance to the picture of some of the Grecian demi-god heroes. Close by, to the right, at a small table, sat his friend and scientific co-laborer, the Jew Louis de Torres, with heaps of books, maps and charts before him; these he reached as required to that wonderful speaker, Christopher Columbus. In plain, terse language he had unfolded, link after link, the conclusive arguments in behalf of the object that filled his head, heart and soul. After years and years of incessant struggle with adversity, unable to make himself heard for a great aim of his life, after knocking in vain at the doors of the wealthy and mighty, battling with ignorance and indifference, at

last a ray of light came into his despondency. The king, persuaded by favorite friends, had granted him an audience and listened to his fervent pleadings. His majesty, on pretense of ignorance on this subject, had referred the whole matter to a council. Everything depended on convincing these sages that there was more than probable certainty in the scientific scheme propounded, and so the sanguine sea-captain had concentrated his very best efforts to present his views in the most favorable light. Alas! the greater part of the learned "Junto" came pre-possessed against him. Was he not a dependent, poor supplicant, an obscure navigator, unknown among the learned, with nothing to commend him but a single crochety idea which contradicted all former experiences, all teachings of science as known in these days, and, worse than all, in direct opposition to the infallible dogmas of the Holy Bible? True, he was before them by sovereign command, but potentates might be very good rulers, warriors, statesmen and diplomats; questions of erudite learning, however, belonged to the scholastic world. And the heads of the sages in the land were now congregated to pass sentence upon the pretentious, never before heard of claims of this proud Genoan. As if to give emphasis to their disdain for the speaker, hardly any one paid earnest attention to what he said. Some whispered among themselves, others riveted their eyes upon the tomes which were before them, still others stealthily made coarse jokes and hid their shaven heads out of sight while laughing and chuckling. One group of friars alone, those belonging to St. Stephen, paid interested attention to him. These were scientific scholars, and showed by their attitudes that the words went home to their understanding, and they might be convinced by arguments. And now the speaker ceased.

After a short time of consultation among themselves, an old priest, with a large volume in his hand, drawled out:—

“Objection No. 1.—The great Lactantius says:—Is any one so foolish as to believe that there are antipodes, with their feet opposite to ours; people who walk with their heels upward and their heads hanging down; that there is a part of the world in which all things are turned topsy-turvy, where the trees grow with their branches downward, and where it rains, hails and snows upward? The idea of the rotundity of the earth was the cause of inventing the fables of the antipodes, with their heels in the air. Such philosophers, having once erred, go on in their absurdities, defending one another.”

He sat down amidst the approving smiles and nods of nearly the whole august congregation. Then one of those immensely adipose, round-headed and full-cheeked priests, so often met with in the public streets, arose, and his long double chin perfectly wobbled as he opened his thick lips to read from a volume similar to that of the first replicant:—

“Objection No. 2.—St. Augustine—may his memory be blessed!—maintains that the doctrine of the antipodes is incompatible with the historical foundation of our holy church, since to assert that there are inhabited lands in the opposite side of the globe would be to maintain also that there are nations not descended from our common father Adam, it being impossible for them to have passed the intervening ocean. This would therefore discredit the Bible, which expressly declares that all men are descended from one common parent.”

He, too, sat down now, amidst general approving demonstrations by his colleagues. Then there arose a gaunt, sinister-looking monk, in the habiliments of the order of the Dominicans; from the girdle

around his waist hung suspended a large ivory cross ; his long, clean-shaven face was surrounded by a wreath-like fringe of black curly hair ; the rest of his head was bald. His dark, small, piercing eyes were overshadowed by dense brows. As he spoke a sudden hush, an absolute silence fell upon the assembly. Everybody knew this was Tomaso Torquemada, the Grand Inquisitor, appointed by Ferdinand and Isabella to this holy office, and lately confirmed therein with unlimited power by the See of Rome. He had come especially from Madrid, by request of his royal sovereigns, to attend this meeting. All were eager and anxious to hear what this great dignitary of the Church had to say on the absorbing subject.

Now, it so happened soon after my arrival at Salamanca that I had met this man. On presenting my credentials and recommendations, he eagerly offered me the then vacant post of the third grand inquisitor of the realm, with priorship and residence held heretofore by himself at Segovia, being confirmed in this office, through his mighty influence, by the Holy Father at Rome, with the title of Arbuez de Epila. From our repeated conversations concerning the status of Catholicism, in which I evinced a zeal and eagerness for the maintenance of absolute priestly rule, he recognized in me a fit confederate for his extended plans and schemes with which his immense brain was pregnant. Submitting to me the topics of Columbus and his new theories for consideration and thorough study, I was able, without much difficulty, to lay before him the results of my reasoning. These were embodied in the following conclusions :—

The views propounded by the foreign sailor are certainly tainted with heresy, but from all information that can be gleaned he is unquestionably a

devout, religious man. Now, while many important passages of divine Scripture are clearly contradicted by his asseverations, and the fathers of the Church, besides those already quoted—St. Chrysostom, St. Augustine, St. Jerome, St. Gregory and many others—condemning the main principles of his plans, yet might there be found, by actual experiment, reality in his proposed venture. In any case, he must be closely questioned as to the heretical part, and if he cleared his skirts from offence in that direction, mild encouragement should be extended to him. Should his calculations prove erroneous, then he and a lot of dangerous adventurers would perish in the wilderness of the ocean and never be heard from again. If, however, success attended the captain and his crew, the fruits thereof would certainly redound to the glory of the Church.

My new patron was deeply convinced by this irresistible logic, and, being much impressed, he spoke. With his peculiar thin and penetrating voice he said :—

“The third objection which I raise consists in this, that the Book of Genesis, the Psalms of David, the prophets, the epistles and gospels, inclusive of the expositions of various saints and reverend commentators, are clearly and heretically contradicted by the innovating problems of you, Christopher Columbus. Make answer to all our objections !”

The plain and simple navigator, as he now took his stand to reply to these seemingly overwhelming obstacles, appeared transformed into a higher being. A great degree of devout feeling gave him confidence, and his ardent temperament became heated to an enraptured enthusiasm as he undauntedly undertook to impress with conviction his august auditory. He cast aside his maps and charts and discarded for the task before him momentarily his practical and

scientific lore ; his visionary spirit kindled at the doctrinal objections of his opponents, and he met them upon their own ground, pouring forth with the grand persuasive tones of his stentorian voice such magnificent texts of the Bible, with their mysterious predictions of the prophets, considered in his ecstasy as forecasts and annunciations of the sublime discovery which he proposed.

This outburst of wonderful eloquence made friends and coadjutors who afterward proved of great service for the accomplishment of the designed voyages to the unknown Western Lands. But for the present the whole subject was referred to the presiding officer of this conclave, after which they adjourned.

Section III.—A Momentous Wedding.

In one of the stately palaces in the old Castilian city of Segovia there was boisterous activity, always signalizing coming festivities of a marriage in high life. It consisted of the endless details necessitated for the successful consummation of such a gay and brilliant event. Servants, with and without livery, hustled one another in the discharge of their onerous duties, their hurry and zeal impressing a beholder, as if on the effort of each individual depended the honor of their noble master and mistress. The scene was certainly a vivid and picturesque one, as man-servants and maid-servants, in their bright national Spanish costumes, brilliant in colors and quaint in shapes, hied hither and thither through the antique halls. Was it not the grand fete-day of beautiful and beloved young Bianca, the only daughter of the millionaire Count Diego de Suson? Not more than seventeen years of age, this rapturous, lovely señorita was to wed at nightfall the cavalier, soldier and renowned poet Don Gomez Enriquez, one

of the bravest captains in the Spanish army, highly distinguished for his valor as an officer and greatly honored for the genius in his many literary writings.

Night has come, the turmoil throughout the princely apartment subsides, quiet is restored, and everything is in readiness for the solemnization of the auspicious ceremony. The bridegroom, with a superb train of relatives, comrades and friends, had arrived. Among the guests who came with him was Christopher Columbus, who led in his beloved wife Beatrice de Enriquez, a near relative of her namesake Don Gomez. They were followed by their intimate friend, the astronomer Louis de Torres.

As the vesper-bells rang from the many-towered cathedrals adjoining the celebrated "Alcazar," the whole bridal cortege repaired to the magnificent chapel, located on the west wing of the palace. Every good and wealthy Catholic sets aside a prominent part of his domicile for religious purposes. Here the reverend vicar, Father Petros Davilla, a near relative of the Bishop of Segovia, in stole and mitre, received them at the brilliantly illuminated altar, and, after going through the gorgeous ritual of the Church, pronounced the words which made the young couple husband and wife, dismissing them with the usual canonical blessing. Amidst showers of kisses and congratulations, the happy pair and the whole assemblage now repaired to the brilliantly illuminated state-room, finely decorated and prepared for the reception of the august company.

The main actors in this domestic drama, on excuse of changing their toilets, momentarily disappeared. It was noticed that a few others also quietly and unostentatiously were gone, all no doubt believing that their absence would not be noticed in so large a crowd.

Then in one of the subterranean recesses of the

pile another strange scene took place, as unique and peculiar, as it was enacted in the utmost silence and secrecy. The bishop who had officiated in the chapel was here, the most prominent of the people assembled. Instead of wearing the sacred insignia of his Christian ecclesiastical rank, he had now a black baretta upon his head, and was dressed in the characteristic gaberdine of a Jewish rabbi. There was thrown over his head a silken shawl hanging down to his waist, ending on both sides with peculiar knotted woollen fringes. A table on which stood two lighted candles and the same number of goblets filled with wine was right before him. Now there entered from the western portal a short procession of men and women. Under a canopy carried by four friends walked the newly-married pair, followed by their parents and a number of attendants.

As these approached the East, the pseudo-priest chanted in Hebrew with most doleful tones the words of the Psalm cxxvi :—

“When the Lord shall bring back the captives of Zion,
We shall be like those who awake from a dream !”

As the words passed his trembling lips, his voice repeatedly faltered and tears rolled down his cheeks. The whole company wept bitterly with him. Amidst their sobs and mournful ejaculations the Rabbi now read the Jewish marriage ceremonial, and wedded them according to the laws of Moses and Israel. The ring being placed on the bride's finger, the blessing over the wine said, the usual prayer chanted and the benedictions bestowed, kisses and congratulations being exchanged once more, the company departed as noiselessly and stealthily as they had come, and soon reappeared, the priest in his cassock, among the impatiently waiting guests above. The feast now proceeded, hilarity and mirth ruled

supreme till daylight broke through the windows, when the visitors, one after another, most in a state of intoxication from the heavy Andalusian wines which had flowed like water, departed for their several homes. The last one to leave the palace was the venerable Father Petros Davilla. He had been carried in a sedan chair all the way from his home at a distant diocese to attend the holy offices of the church at the marriage of the only daughter of his life-long friend, the Count de Suson. He was now belated, it being long after sunrise. According to special and urgent request of his host and the fair Beatrice de Enriquez, he had attended a confidential meeting with Columbus and DeTorres. These had left with despairing, depressed spirits the learned commission convened by royal mandate at Salamanca. Every effort to convince this body of prejudiced and stultified clerical scientists of the feasibility of discovering some unknown Western Hemisphere had failed, and the sanguine hopes of the Genoa sailor were dashed to the ground. There was nothing to be expected from the bigoted, narrow-minded Bishop of Avila, to whom, as president of the conclave, the whole matter had been referred. Humiliated, utterly cast down and crushed in spirit, the captain and his friend returned late that evening to their temporary home in the city. Senora Beatrice here had long and feverishly awaited their coming. She, poor woman, had dedicated her whole young life to this noble, ambitious man, and he, although of mature age, loved her with an ardor and constancy that would have done credit to a youthful swain. True, the church had never sanctioned their union. As a foreigner and away from friends and home it was impossible for him to procure the necessary proofs of his legal rights to marry the lady. The priests were inexorable about the technicalities. But

he had publicly acknowledged her as his wife, and in their connubial companionship were all in all to one another. Such alliances were not infrequent among the southern people. Although the clergy looked upon them with disfavor, yet the citizens, knowing and readily comprehending the surrounding circumstances, acknowledged as valid and irreproachable such civil contracts, especially if the children begotten in such unions were registered in the civil courts as legitimate, which was publicly known to have been done afterward at the birth of their son Fernando.

During their happy and most felicitous marital life, often and often it had been the trying task of the lady to uphold and cheer the frequent moods of dejection and dispiritedness caused by the many failures and disappointments in hopes and anticipations of her fondly loved husband, with whom she shared all the exuberant dreams of the ultimate success in his schemes and plans. By her magnificently blended qualities of true womanly devotion of heart and a superior eloquence, inspired by her love, she thus far always had succeeded in raising his sinking spirits. But when he returned that evening, she read in his countenance and that of his friend the paroxysm of despondency which agitated both. Neither her soothing words, passionate caresses, nor her freely-flowing tears had this time the wonted effect to dispel the gloom and darkness with which the two men stared into the starless future. Under these unpropitious circumstances the vehicle arrived to take them all to the wedding of their friends at Segovia, which was to transpire on to-morrow evening. This involved a journey of ten hours, and it was now past midnight. Gladly would they have stayed at home in their grief-stricken and forlorn condition. Full of sadness they reluctantly got

ready and started. It seemed more like a funeral cortege than a trip to a wedding feast. In due time they arrived at the palace. When the ceremonies were over and while the festivities were in progress, the lady had found a chance to meet the Count Diego and make him a confidant of her troubles. After mature consideration, they called on the Vicar Davilla, requesting his presence at a family consultation. This had just been concluded, with the favorable result of quieting and restoring the disturbed temper of the captain and his friend to an equanimous condition, principally achieved by appealing to their religious feelings, directing their hearts and souls to trust in the wisdom and goodness of an over-ruling Providence. And now, after a most devoted and affectionate farewell, the pious prelate, ready to depart, descended to his sedan chair, which was waiting. The whole family had accompanied him to the door; then they retired. As soon as he had entered the spacious and comfortable vehicle, closed on all sides by silken curtains, he took from the recesses of his wide cassock a little bag. This contained a set of philacteries. Placing one around his head and winding the other around his left arm, he commenced to say in Hebrew his morning prayers. At this moment those watching at the windows in the palace saw mounted men approach the sedan chair, commanding its carriers to halt. They then sprang to the ground, tore away the curtains, dragged the old priest from his place, and, accoutred as he was, shackled him with heavy irons. They were recognized by the spectators above as the myrmidons of the Inquisition. Consternation now ruled supreme in the household of the noble family. By imperative command of the Count, the young husband mounted the fleetest charger in the stables and fled for his life, leaving his

young wife, who had swooned in his arms, to the protective care of her parents. Columbus, Beatrice and De Torres were gotten quietly but hastily away. Their attendance here must either have been ignored or never known, for they were of the few of the company who were not afterwards harassed or molested. Most of the others, including De Suson, his wife and daughter, found themselves, that very same day, prisoners in the dungeon of the Third Grand Inquisitor, the Bishop Arbuez de Epila, of Segovia.

Section IV.—Misericordia et Justitia.

There is no spot in the world where measures of greater importance for the weal or woe of mankind were devised than in the narrow, cell-like rectory of the Cathedral at Segovia. Adjoining the fine altar in the vestibule, this little room is commonly used during service for the robing of the officiating priests, from whence they issue through a side door leading to the altar of the magnificent edifice. At high noon of this day, however, when the arrests by the sheriffs of the Inquisition were made at the palace of Diego de Suson, the sun shone through the long but narrow windows upon four individuals, dressed in the sombre garbs of the order of the Dominicans, who were seated at a long table which filled out nearly the whole space. A tomb could not have been more secluded than this place. Yet, for greater precaution, monks of the same order flitted in and out from the numerous recesses and nooks of the cloister-like structure, warning off the passers. Aside of this, the great bell in the immense tower tolled at regular intervals a single low and hollow peal from its brazen mouth, advising the people that they must stay away from the neighborhood of

the cathedral. To complete all, the chief Alguazil of the Holy Office, with a band of armed knaves, guarded the outside portal and all entrances to the church. Thus it was proclaimed that the "Consejo de la Suprema" was in regular session.

At the head of the table sat the General Grand Inquisitor, Tomaso Torquemada; opposite him the chief scribe, Christoval Galvez, of Valencia; to the right was his eminence Cardinal Petre Gonzales de Mendoza, archbishop of Saragossa and Second Grand Inquisitor; to his left sat I, the Third Grand Inquisitor of Segovia. This was the august tribunal in whose consecrated hands lay the fate of the world for the present and for centuries to come.

They had but one solitary object, were unanimous in their work, and knew but one ambition. *The Catholic religion was the sole and only faith, as the supreme mistress of the globe! If persuasion and remonstrance would convert the heretics, well and good! This failing, torture and death! No pretense, no sham, no mere conversion should suffice. Total allegiance was required and exclusively accepted. To the fire with the impostors!* His Holiness the Pope Sextus IV. had sanctioned the fanatic zeal of the Spanish Dominicans, confirmed the Inquisitor-General in his office of hierarchical absolute power, and sent his nuncio extraordinary, Antonio Palavicini, to the court of Madrid.

Their Royal Highnesses Ferdinand and Isabella were fully in accord with the priests, though from different motives. Ferdinand, with his vaulting ambition for power, avaricious and greedy, saw in this movement the strengthening of his sceptre; but mostly the filling of his much decimated coffers, which grew empty by incessant warfare and the extravagance of the court. Confiscation of wealth from the convicted sinners, of which he was promised one-

third, was for him perhaps the paramount inducement to lend his power to the machinations of the church. Isabella, however, with her pious, bigoted disposition, augmented by being continually under the influence of her bland but jealous father-confessor, Ferdinando de Talavera, Bishop of Avila, she was mainly actuated in joining the forces of the church by a sacred vow made before entering upon the conquest of the infidel Moors in the province and city of Grenada, that if the Lord would bestow victory upon the banners of Christianity, she would use all her might and power to exterminate heresy from the empire. And now the infidels had been conquered. The last of the Moslem chiefs, Boabdil el Chico, had surrendered on the twentieth of September, 1487, with all his possessions and rights to the Spanish crown. What could she do now less than to fulfil her sacred oath and promise? Both the king and queen, therefore, not only acquiesced but actively entered into the scheme, driving the unbelievers from their realms. For the achievement of this supreme purpose they placed Torquemada at the helm of the already powerful Inquisition.

For nearly one hundred years had the irrepressible civil and church power caused thousands of the hated Jews to submit to baptism under the name of "New Christians," who, with the crucifix in their hands, succeeded in escaping persecution and death.

It seemed a step forward to evangelize the world. If only the sprinkling of the head with the holy water could be invested with the power to penetrate to the heart! But in this the baptismal font and the proffered sacramental chalice offered to and accepted by the mouth, miserably failed, making wretched hypocrites and mercenary dupes of the new acquisitions. True, some of the new, worthless converts, with the usual over-zeal of that class, for the

achievement of coveted worldly ends, turned savagely against their former friends and co-religionists, embittering and endangering their lives even worse than the original enemy. It became a saying, "Accursed is the apostate to the seventieth generation." Yet the *vox populi* estimated the whole class of the deserters rightly and named them "The Marannen," a corrupted use of the Latin malediction, "Anathema Maranatha." By far the greatest number of these renegades, while publicly practising all the rights and requirements of their newly adopted obligations, idolatrous and superstitious to their minds, secretly remained true and steadfast to the religion of their fathers. In the hidden recesses of their homes they clung steadily to their inherited faith, and observed most scrupulously the rites and uses of the Mosaic and Rabbinical laws. Nor was the race-affinity extinguished by the forced acquisitions of the church. On the contrary, pity, sympathy and tolerant forbearance continued to flow between the steadfast members of the Semites and the apparently severed renegades from the fold. All this could have been easily borne or overlooked by the not over-scrupulous faith which had so easily adopted these newly found children, had not new and unforeseen complications arisen which threatened to absorb the absorber and engulf papacy and monarchy. The ecclesiastical and civil courts must, as a natural consequence of the recognized position of these new Christians, remove all the former bars raised against them when they yet were nonconformists; must admit them to all the rights, privileges and honors of the old members of the country and church. Freed from the hindering obstacles which hitherto had bound them, the aggressive spirit of the race, which neither the holy water nor the sacred wine and bread could extirpate, became manifested

to a staggering degree. They, by inborn shrewdness, frugality and long-practised talent for financial enterprises, accumulated with preponderating rapidity and success unparalleled stores of wealth, thereby gaining immense power and influence. Intermarriage with the nobles and aristocrats, no longer interdicted, made them of the flesh and blood of the highest grandees, the lords and the princes of the realm. By long cherished traditional Levitic descent and superior education, these "Sephardim," as the southern Hebrews called themselves, claimed to be the nobility of the race. With fine, stately appearances, haughty, proud spirits, and backed by all the refinements and glammers which wealth lends to its possessors, what more natural than their success in matrimonial alliances with the fiery, easily impressed and early matured daughters of Hispanola, whose love of the romantic perceived in these new chevaliers desirable suitors for their hands and hearts? Many of these young men had already titles of nobility; others by influence and money could easily procure them, if permitting themselves to be handsomely bled by the always impoverished exchequer of the sovereigns. Thus an entire upheaval in the social relations was threatened; all the more so, as the line of the young nobility was continually emaciated by the never-ceasing wars, and one of the spruce, comely and rich Marannen was mostly acceptable to the not over-scrupulous noble maidens. Not three generations had thus passed when Jewish blood flowed in the veins of many of the ancient families of the proud Hidalgos.

Nor did this constitute the only or supreme danger. A considerable number of the proselytes had taken to high studies, many becoming ordained members of the clergy, and several attaining to the priestly dignities of bishops and cardinals. These

people had by their early training imbibed the Hebrew spirit of the Torah and the Talmud; but what was to be far more feared was the wonderful and acute analytical philosophy of one of the foremost writers the world has ever seen, the matchless physician and rabbi, Moses Maimonides. Since Plato and Aristotle, no reasoning and profundity had with such illustrious brilliancy risen in the annals of profane or sacred literature as this superlatively great author. Although he had lived nearly three hundred years ago at Cordova, yet the already ripe persecutions of the time drove him from his native land and he settled, after many vicissitudes, in Cairo (old), where he became court physician to the renowned Kaliph Saladin, and where, during the rest of his career, he composed those unparalleled master-works of human thought which seem inspired like the ancient writings of the prophets and seers. Fortunately for me and my cause they were written in the Arabic language, and therefore accessible to few. Otherwise they would long since have revolutionized the world, surely and ultimately overthrowing superstition, priestcraft and despotism. Especially is this the case with one of his books called "Moreh N'buchim" (guide of the perplexed). So transcendent, clear and comprehensive are developed therein the principles of right, law, justice, conscience and freedom, that all the powers of darkness will crumble to pieces if these teachings shall once be universally known and accepted. Men of his own learned profession, benighted by the old orthodox spirit with which they have groped through the centuries, could not stand the flood of blinding light which is shed by this powerful lens, and often quarrelling and fuming over the (to them) incomprehensible teachings, these Rabbins themselves had excommunicated the author and publicly burned the

volumes. Imagine then, who can, this corrosive element injected into the dark blood of Popery. Who can calculate the consequences, if this insidious power is permitted, unhindered and unstemmed, to insinuate itself into the marrow and bones of the church, which as yet not even permitted her children the right to read the Bible, Talmud or Koran.

And to crown all in this perplexed situation, there had arisen from out of the loins of the unconverted Jews, contemporaneous with all these present complications, one of those phenomenal giant-minds, who appear as if by providential direction, always in the hour of greatest need among those accursed people, giving them renewed strength, vigor and power, and saving them from annihilation at the very brink of destruction. Don Isaac ben Juda Abarbanel came as if in the nick of time such a chosen instrument. Born in Lisbon, 1437, he was a scion of an illustrious ancestry, dating back, according to well-preserved family traditions, to King David. The grandson of the celebrated Samuel Abarbanel, sainted and martyred two generations ago, this young Don Isaac had attained to high and distinguished honors at the throne of Portugal. Alphonso V., an enlightened, tolerant, amiable and benignant sovereign, whose attention was casually directed to the youthful statesman and financier, soon raised him to the honor of minister of state, made him his confidential adviser and general favorite. Unfortunately, in the midst of so promising a career his majesty died and was succeeded by Ioao II. (1481), in every respect the opposite of his great father. Jealousy, dissension and false accusation soon prepared the downfall of Abarbanel, and he had to flee for life from his native land, leaving behind a loving wife and three promising sons, also great wealth and possessions. By

an almost miraculous escape from pursuing officers, he reached, after great hardships and privations, the Spanish city of Toledo, where he took up his temporary residence. His family was permitted to join him, but all his earthly goods were confiscated. Reduced to abject poverty, he was, notwithstanding, received by his co-religionists and the educated Christians with great distinction and hospitality. He devoted at first all his time to much-neglected literary works. In this, his favorite occupation, he was not, however, to remain long. His reputation as a political economist and diplomat had long preceded him, and the court at Madrid, being in sore want of such talents, after a short interval, called him into the service of the Spanish sovereigns. Here, too, he succeeded in making himself almost indispensable to the Catholic royalties, enjoying for a time a peerless influence, even among the hostile courtiers and the hateful prelates. Thereby he became a veritable tower of protection to his otherwise helpless brethren, standing between them and the ever-increasing wrath of the Inquisition.

Fearful as had already been the persecution against the hapless Marannen by the church since the official introduction of the Inquisition, yet the culmination of their misfortune was reached when the primates of the holy tribunal now in session at the rectory at the Dominican cathedral of Segovia, concocted the means by which to entirely exterminate the hated race.

When the eminent secretary had finished reading the former proceedings of this august body, which pictured fully and completely the ineffectual results thus far attained, in spite of the frequently repeated *auto da fê* and its terrible adjunct, the torture, it became apparent to the Junta that still more stringent and searching expedients were necessary to

accomplish the ruin of their victims. Then it was that his eminence the Inquisitor-General drew from the pockets of his robe a written document containing the twenty-eight rules which should become historically notorious for their abnormal severity and radical stringency, and as he handed them to the secretary to be read, addressed us in these words:

“Brethren and co-laborers in the glorious mission of purifying our revered church from the damnable taints of heresy and rational unbelief! Now or never we must succeed! Away with maudlin feelings and sympathies! Let the reign of the Savior come on the wings of a chariot of fire. Down with the traitors! Down with the dissenters! Let us hear and adopt these articles. They are the inspired work of our great coadjutor, this our dear brother of Segovia. The Holy Father at Rome ought to canonize him for the sublime conception. It will strike our enemies with the sword of Gideon!”

The utmost quiet reigned. The strained attitude of breathless attention was almost painful. Then the reading commenced. These long-drawn-out rules contained five principal sections, in twenty-eight paragraphs:

1. From Nos. 1 to 10 deal with the summons for the heretics to come forward and confess, also the duties of the submissive.

2. From Nos. 11 to 13 concern themselves with the penalties in the prisons of the office.

3. From Nos. 14 to 19 deal with the procedure of trial, inclusive of the torture.

4. From Nos. 20 to 21 constitute the jurisdiction over dead heretics and the vassals of living nobles.

5. From Nos. 21 to 28 inclusive, establish points in the details of management.

During and after the reading of the sections, these grave and reverend signores behaved like a parcel of

over-exuberant schoolboys. They shouted acclamations to each rule; they jumped violently from their seats, entranced with every measure; they clapped their hands and boisterously laughed with satisfaction over the proposed enactments. Finally, at the end of the reading, such exclamations were heard as these: "We'll do it—we have got them surely! Misericordia et Justitia!"

So the enormities of the twenty-eight rules were adopted unanimously. They needed for full force yet the approval of the full Consejo, which was called shortly to meet at Seville, when six apostolical councillors, the fiscal procurator, two more secretaries, and the grand treasurer were to be present to approve and sign the document, as was now done by all convened here. But this was only a technicality, every person so required being but the too-willing tool of the Inquisitor-General. Before the present council adjourned one more measure was devised. The prisoners taken this morning in the act of Judaizing were consigned for absolute disposal to the power of the Third Inquisitor, Arbuez de Epila.

Section V.—The Torture of Hope Blasted.

Four weeks had now passed since the capture of the prisoners and the meeting of the Consejo de la Suprema. Caught in the very act of Judaizing, the imprisoned people were *ipso factum* guilty of heresy, punishable by death in being burned at the stake at the next ensuing *auto da fé*. Considerations of great importance made it necessary to act with the greatest caution in the treatment of these convicts. I had been enjoined to the utmost by the Inquisitor-General to use every possible means, kind or harsh, for inducing the backsliders to betray such confederates and associates as were guilty of similar

offences. Especially was this aimed at the venerable and highly influential Bishop of Seville, Don Juan Arias Davilla. Of Portuguese Hebrew ancestors, this high dignitary of the church had risen to the eminent position which he held by personal worth, profound learning and influential connections at the court of Madrid. He was an eye-sore and obstacle to Torquemada. Every means of his craft were employed to encompass the downfall of this enemy. And here was now a near relative and trusted friend of our foe in the meshes of our power, who perhaps might be persuaded, either by the blandishments of hope for pardon or the excruciating pains of torture, to implicate him of Seville, and maybe other high recreants, of being guilty of practising in secret Israelitish rites and ceremonies; in other words, the mortal offence of Judaizing, the worst kind of heresy known to the law. Thus far, I had, however, ignominiously failed. Neither the men nor the women, spite of the most insinuating conditions offered, spite of the most horrible punishments inflicted, would depart from their heroically stolid exclamation, "We know nothing!" All but the old rabbi-priest lay now in the throes of fearful agony. I had them tortured this day for the third time, to press out of them, by the so-called "pre-able," the revelation of their accomplices.

When brought to the operating-room, there was no other light in the pestiferous dungeon-cell but what was shed by a few tallow candles. The walls, as in all these infernal places, were lined with a kind of black-colored quilting, which covers all crevices, so that the cries of the sufferers should not be heard outside. Not the least consideration was shown to the females in the proceedings which now followed. They were treated with as much severity as their male companions in misery, with the additional

mortification of having the most shocking indecencies added to their pitiful lot. As soon as brought in, the executioner fastened iron chains around their bodies, which, crossing upon the stomach, terminated at the wrist. Thus manacled, they forced the back of each unfortunate against a thick board; at the extremity of this was a pulley, through which ran a rope catching the ends of the chains at the wrists. Stretching the ropes by means of a roller placed at a distance, the most excruciating pressure was exerted in proportion as the ends of the chains were drawn tighter. By this process the joints of the hands, arms and shoulders were soon dislocated. Blood spurted from the mouth, nostrils, and, in fact, every pore of the body. Amidst all this horror no other words escaped the sufferers but now and then a faint supplication to heaven for patience, for help, for power to persevere in truth and in integrity. The women had to be carried, the men led back to their dungeons.

Their forms and appearances were utterly unrecognizable. Especially was a shocking change visible in the bride of but a month ago. Her bright, rosy countenance was transformed into a sallow, bloodless pale; the brilliancy of the eyes was extinguished to a listless stare; the plump outlines of her graceful figure had disappeared, and she looked more like a decrepit old dame than a young female. Correspondingly conspicuous was the change of the others. On to-morrow they were to be relieved of their earthly troubles. It was appointed as one of the fete-days of an *auto da fé*. One final effort I purposed, however, to make that very evening with the very obstinate Petros Davilla. (The following incident, with only the change of name, is taken from the French of Villiers d'Isle.)

“Toward nightfall I, followed by a friar and pre-

ceded by two familiars carrying torches, descended to one of the lower dungeons. The lock of a massive door was turned, and we entered a foul-smelling "inpace," where by the dim light could be discerned, between two iron rings fastened into the wall, a bench stained with blood, a brazier and a pitcher. On a litter of dirty straw crouched a haggard-looking man, whose clothes hung in rags. He had a band of iron around his neck, connected by a heavy chain to another ring in the wall just above his head. His age was indistinguishable. I addressed the prisoner, with the following words, dissembling deep sorrow, the false tears actually coming to my eyes: "My son, rejoice; your trials on this earth are soon to come to an end! Through your hardness of heart I have been under the painful necessity of inflicting the most agonizing torture; my duty of fraternal correction has its limits. You are the barren fig-tree which must no longer cumber the ground; but it is for the Almighty alone to dispose of your soul. Possibly His infinite love may shed its rays upon you at the last moment. Let us hope so. I have known instances of it. So be it. Rest in peace this evening. To-morrow you will take part in the *auto da fé*; that is, you will be exposed *quemadero*, a premonitory for the eternal flame. It burns the victim, I need not tell you, from a distance, and death will not come to you in less than two hours—perhaps three; it is slow because of the wet cloths that are placed over the brow and heart. There will be only forty-three of you. Be thankful that, as you will be in the last row, you will have plenty of time to invoke God and offer up your prayers in this baptism of fire. Put your trust in the light, and sleep." I made a sign to my attendants to unrivet the captive's fetters and embraced him tenderly. Then it was the Father Redeptor's turn.

He, in a low voice, asked pardon of the doomed man for all that he had made him suffer—for the redemption of the soul. Then the two familiars kissed him in silence. This ceremony over, the captive was left alone in the darkness. Don Petros sat helpless, staring at the closed door—closed, that word aroused one distinct idea in the midst of his confusion of mind. It was that he had seen, for one instant, the glimmer from the lantern between the door and the wall. A hope—a hope evidently due to the tension of his brain—rolls within him. He dragged himself to the door, and cautiously running his fingers between the fissure, pulled the door toward him. Oh! extraordinary good fortune! The jailer had turned the key before the door was completely shut.

The rabbi-priest ventured to look outside. His eyes, used to the darkness, had no difficulty in distinguishing a semi-circular space, inclosed by earthen walls, and several staircases leading to the upper floor. At the end of it, straight in front of him, were some steps leading to a back porch, opening on what seemed a corridor, of which he could see only a few arches. He crawled on hands and knees to this porch. Yes, it was a corridor, but an interminably long one. It was but dimly lighted; small oil-lamps were hung at long intervals to the beams and only served to make the darkness visible. The end of the corridor was lost in a gloom. There was not a door in the length of the wall. On the left was a small, closely-barred window, which now let in a few rays of reddish light from above—so he judged it must be evening. And what an unearthly silence reigned in that place! However, down at the end and hidden in the darkness might be a door leading to liberty. It was his last hope; so, keeping under the shadow on his left, he crept slowly, on

hands and feet, at full length, courageously suppressing a groan whenever he struck one of the wounds with which his body was covered.

Suddenly a sandaled footstep echoes through the length of the stone corridor. He is seized with terror, his sight fails him, and he waits half dead with apprehension lest he should be discovered. It is a familiar, hurrying to some dungeon. A cowl conceals his countenance, and he passes rapidly, with a pair of flesh-nippers in his hand. The fugitive is so terrified that, weakened as he is with pain and hunger, nearly an hour passes before he has strength to move. The dread of having to undergo additional torture in case of being discovered makes him for a moment think of turning back, but hope whispers to his soul — that divine gift which perhaps comforts us in our worst afflictions. A miracle had been performed for his rescue. He must not doubt it; so he went on, though exhausted by hunger and fear, toward possible escape. This sepulchral passage seems to lengthen mysteriously, but he keeps his eyes fixed on the darkness beyond, where surely there must be some exit. Again footsteps are heard, but heavier and slower. The black and white gowns and shovel-hats of two inquisitors emerge from the darkness. They are talking in low tones and gesticulating, as if they were in argument upon some important subject. On seeing them, Father Petros shuts his eyes, his heart beats as if it would break, and a cold sweat of agony bursts out on him; he lies as if dead just under the light of a lamp, invoking the God of David to his aid.

The two inquisitors stop under the lamp in the heat of their discussion. One of them, who is listening to his companion's argument, keeps his eyes fixed on the priest, and he, not remarking the absent

look in those staring orbs, seems already to feel the red-hot pincers tearing his flesh. But the eyes of the inquisitors are those of men completely absorbed in the conversation and studying answers to a companion's query. In fact, in a few minutes the two sinister individuals continue on their way slowly, and still conversing in low tones, toward the semi-circular court through which the fugitive had passed. He has not been seen! It was so extraordinary an escape that the poor wretch, in the confusion of the mind, says to himself, "Am I already dead, that no one sees me?"

He must hurry to the place where he hopes for the deliverance, toward the shadowy place which is now only about thirty paces distant. So he crawls out further and soon comes to the dark part of this gruesome corridor. He feels a draft of cold air on his hands; it comes from under the door. O God, if this door only opens on the outer world! He is giddy with hope and fear. He feels, but can discover no bolts or lock—simply a latch. He rises to his feet, presses the latch, which yields silently, and the door stands open before him.

"Hallelujah!" sighs he, in a transport of thankfulness at the sight that greets his eyes. The door has opened on a garden, under a sky bright with stars, on liberty and life. It looks upon the surrounding country. Toward the sierra in that direction is safety. Oh! he will fly! he will run all night under the cover of citron woods, the perfume of which regales his nostrils even from this spot. Once in the mountains he will be safe. He is breathing God's pure air; the winds refreshing him, his lungs grow stronger; he seems to hear the words addressed to Lazarus, and to bless the God who has been so infinitely merciful to him he stretches forth his arms and raises his eyes to the firmament. Then he

thinks he sees the shadow of arms descend upon himself—he seems to feel these shadowy arms clasp around him—he is enfolded in a tender embrace. A tall figure stands near him. He lowers his eyes and they become fixed on the person before him in horror and despair. It is I, Ben Beor!

He is in my arms! I look at him with compassionate mien as a shepherd would at a lost sheep. I press him to my heart with such apparent fervent charity that the sharp points of his hair shirt press into my flesh. He nearly faints with grief. Then I speak to him, concentrating all the unctuous tenderness my voice is capable of, and say, “Dear Brother Petros, did you wish to leave us on the eve of possible salvation? Unburden thy rebellious heart to me and confess, brother, confess; tell me now of the sins and recantations of friends and relatives, and, by the honor of Him crucified, thy own misdeeds shall be considered atoned, and we will bestow such marks of distinction upon thee as to obliterate every suffering, every danger now threatening liberty and life.”

In my over-wrought excitement and over-strained enthusiasm I did not notice that the emaciated form held in my arms had grown lax and limp, and that on the first relaxation of my embrace, which supported him upright, he fell heavily to the ground. Father Petros Davilla was dead—blasted hope had killed him.”

Section VI.—A Grand Auto da Fé.

The next day was appointed as a grand act of the faith—the *auto da fé*.

The officers of the Inquisition, precisely at noon, amidst the tolling of the church-bells of Segovia, and preceded by the kettle-drums, trumpets and banners,

marched in procession to the Quemadero. This was the large quadrangular space especially set apart and arranged for our purpose. The three sides were surrounded by a prodigious number of people, dressed in holiday garb, as splendid as their respective circumstances would allow. Double rows of chairs prevented them from encroaching on the square assigned for the horrid performance. In the centre of these was raised a high scaffold, assigned for the criminals of both sexes, brought from all parts of the kingdom. The whole court of Spain had come purposely to be present at this occasion. The eastern side was especially arranged for them. In the centre of this balcony two throne-chairs were provided for the king and queen. The rest of the long space was assigned for the ministers of state and the courtiers with their ladies, all in gala attire. Above the thrones, in an elevated lodge, as to signify their superiority even to royalty, sat the three Grand Inquisitors and their attendants. They remained seated when, amidst great acclamation of joy and shouts of welcome, Ferdinand and Isabella entered their quarters and took their allotted seats. The Queen looked very beautiful. Well formed, of middle size, with great dignity and gracefulness of movement, grave but sweet in demeanor, her complexion fair, her hair auburn, inclining to red, her eyes of a clear blue with a benign expression, there was a singular modesty in her countenance, gracing as it does a wonderful firmness of purpose and earnestness of spirit. The King is a fitting match to this remarkable woman. He is of middle stature, well proportioned and active from athletic exercise. His carriage is free, erect and majestic; he has a clear, serene forehead, which appears more lofty from his head being partly bald; his eyebrows are thick, and, like his hair, of a bright chestnut color; his eyes

are clear and animated ; the complexion is somewhat ruddy and scorched from exposure in war ; his mouth is moderate in size, well formed and gracious in its expression. Both royal persons are dressed in the grand splendor befitting their majesties.

Presently, as the signals sound, the doomed prisoners are slowly led in. They are preceded by a large number of clerical celebrants in their friar gowns, a cross in one hand and a lighted wax candle in the other. Their heads, shaven at the crown, are bare. From their girdles hang huge rosaries. Next two monks carry upon a bier the dead body of Petros Davilla. Then one comes bearing a paste-board figure of Don Gomez Enriquez, who has not been apprehended, which is to be burned in effigy. After him walk the women and the men to be burned at the stake, the former one led by Bianca, the latter by her father, the Count de Suson. They all are dressed in the Benitto, coarse, close-fitting garbs, painted with the figures of the devil, skulls and cross bones ; each one bears a large red cross. Their heads are crowned with high pointed paper caps, also marked with terrible-looking figures. These were the dresses of the doomed. There were forty-three of them in all ; but to them were added a train of fifty Jews and Jewesses, for some ecclesiastical transgression, ten Spaniards indicted for bigamy and witchcraft, and two Morescoes, for having practised the Moslem religion. All were led with ropes around their necks and torches on their shackled hands.

Now mass began, the priests coming to the altar placed near the scaffold. When they had finished they seated themselves in chairs placed for that purpose.

The chief Inquisitors then descended from the amphitheatre where they had thus far waited. Each

was dressed in copes, the mitre on their heads. The General bore a golden cross; the second Grand Inquisitor carried a large tome of the Gospel in his arms, and I held the sacred censers in my hand. After bowing to the altar, we advanced to the royal balcony. The King and Queen then arose, as did the whole assembly, and every one of the faithful repeated an oath read by Torquemada, "To protect the Catholic faith, to extirpate the heretics, and support with all power the decrees of the Inquisition." Then turning toward the multitude, I proclaimed the sentences of the several criminals. We now retired, and the executioner with his brutal helpers, all carrying burning torches, made their way to the scaffold, awaiting the signal of setting fire to the heaps of fagots. At this instant a scene ensued which baffled description.

Bianca, in her youth and what remained of her beauty, being now on the same side of the platform where the Queen was seated, ran forward, freeing herself with the power of despair, and, falling on her knees, with most pathetic words and gestures addressed her majesty, sobbing and weeping. "Most gracious Queen," she cried, "will not your royal presence give me some hope of pardon in my miserable condition? Have regard—have pity for my youth, for my innocence of any crime! Can you, will you see one of your sex die this terrible death?" The Queen seemed greatly moved, but she turned her eyes away, which bystanders saw were full of tears, as she did not dare to speak a favorable word for one who had been declared and sentenced as a heretic. Then she was heard to say these historical and memorable words: "Virgin Mother of the Redeemer, what misery must I commit in thy name!"

A general shout by the people was raised and the

universal cry came, "Let the dog's beard be made!" which implied to singe the hair of the doomed men. This is now done by means of flaming furzes thrust with long poles against their faces. This is continued until their hair and faces are burned. Fire is now set to the fagots and the place soon becomes a sea of flame. The spectators shouted themselves hoarse; but amidst all the noise can be heard the prayers and the songs of the victims till nearly to the end, when there is nothing left but a heap of bones and ashes.

Section VII.—A Frustrated Complot.

The enormous activity displayed in rapid succession by the suddenly acquired strength of the Inquisition would have taken possession of the entire Hispanolian peninsula but for the massive opposition which it found in the provinces of Aragonia and Valencia. The influential and wealthy inhabitants, a large number of whom were "New Christians," or related with such, had obtained from times beyond the memory of men a royal grant that the property of no criminal should ever be confiscated by the State. And they watched over this privilege with the utmost jealousy. All their powerful efforts at Rome, as well as with their sovereigns, failed through the iron will of a man the Junta had fitly chosen to represent the Church and her newly acquired dominion. There was selected for this trying and dangerous position the second Grand Inquisitor, Bishop Pedro Arbuez de Epila, to reside at Saragossa, the capital of the province. In his early youth he had been a soldier, rising to the rank of captain. In the field and among his comrades no one was ever known for higher courage, boldness and gallantry than this young nobleman. During

a long spell of sickness, while infected with small-pox, he had visions and dreams which made him a religious devotee. The marks of the disease left him with a terrible appearance. On recovery he joined the Church, becoming a Dominican friar, rising by tireless study and zealous performance of religious duties to the dignity he now held. Knowing himself supported by both the ecclesiastical and civil authorities, he laughed at the threats and remonstrances of the Cortes and the enemies of the sacred innovations, and snatched from out of their teeth two victims to be tried for Judaizing heresy. These were tortured, condemned to be burned and their estates to be confiscated according to the established rules of the holy tribunal. Among the forty-two who had suffered in the *auto da fé* at Segovia these two were of the number. The excitement at Saragossa at this outrage against vested rights rose to fever heat.

It was soon ascertained by trusted informers that a determined conspiracy had been formed whose first aim had been against the life of de Epila. Espionage had become from the very start one of the main auxiliaries of the new persecution. Granting absolution and immunity to all informers, and making knowledge of any guilt, without revealing the same to the respective authorities, tantamount to the commission of the same, the spy became the corroding poison infused into the life-blood of the nation. There was no longer security from kindred and relationship—love and friendship, in the highest degree, had ceased to exist. Parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, friends and associates—all became distrustful towards each other. A desire for revenge, a wish for ruining a neighbor—malice and envy needed but to rap at night on the door of the tormentor's office, ever ready to open,

and the heinous purpose was effected. As soon, therefore, as information of personal danger reached the bishop, he had brought forth his old military suit of mail, protecting himself from head to foot with the steel links of impenetrable security. Every precaution was taken besides against surprise and outbreak, and measures of the greatest magnitude devised to discover the leaders and members of the conspirators.

All this, however, miserably failed; for when at an early morning the bishop went forth from his residence to the church to attend holy mass, and while he lay there upon his knees saying the Latin words of the rite, four men, deeply masked and with drawn swords, sprang from one of the niches of the sanctuary, hewed savage blows upon him, wounding his arm and neck; the blood spurted high up to the altar. Then the assailants successfully made their escape. The wounded man had to be carried to his bed, and, in spite of the best medical skill employed, he died in great agony two days after.

On learning this news, the Inquisitor-General, by special messenger, required me to proceed to the scene of the murder, with instructions and full power to act. When I arrived there I found the city a cauldron of raging indignation. All the sympathy which the people had heretofore bestowed upon the "New Christians," and all the dislike they had felt against the promulgation of the holy tribunal, now vanished in the unparalleled assassination of one of the anointed of the Lord. In several places masses of people were collected, roaring for vengeance against the Marannen. The slaughter would have been terrible but for the timely and powerful intercession of the humane and generous archbishop of this diocese, Prince Alphonso de Aragon, a near relative of the sovereigns. He passed through the streets and by words

and assurances restrained the mob from violence. He was very popular with the masses. On his solemn promise that the guilty murderers and their confederates should be visited with the fullest punishment for their crime, the people retired.

The task assigned to me was certainly a difficult one, and required the utmost care, tact and scrutiny for attaining the mission on which I had arrived. Not the slightest trace of the four masked assailants could be found. They had come and fled without being recognized by any one. Nor was there yet to be found a clue to the carefully covered instigators and confederates in the crime. All I could do for the present was to watch and wait, offering immunities and a large reward to any one who would give information leading to the detection of the bloody plotters. From my knowledge of human nature I was satisfied that a conspiracy which must have had wide ramifications, would before long show some signs of its existence and several tangible tokens of one or the other of its hiding-places. Nor was I mistaken in this.

On the very first day of my presence here, while at vespers in the cathedral, and while keeping a searching eye on the assembled congregation, I noticed in one of the side pews near the altar, from whence I could look directly into the faces, two females who to all appearances were mother and daughter. The older one was very stout, dark, and with a handsome, aristocratic-looking face. She watched with great solicitude over the young girl seated by her side, whose dark eyes were riveted upon the rosary. Several times I saw, when she lifted the long black lashes, that tears in ample profusion rolled down her round cheeks. Her finely cut and bright red lips trembled and twitched under the brave effort of suppressing sobs. She was very youthful; certainly

not more than eighteen years old. From under the white veil there stole out a mass of short, blue-black curls which encircled the face like a wreath. The contour of her profile was romanesque. Add to this the well-formed shoulders and fully developed bust, and there was certainly an ideal model for the picture of a Madonna, worthy the brush of a Titians or his master, Zuccati.

From one of the father-confessors I learned that these ladies were wife and daughter of a somewhat impoverished Valencian nobleman, Vidal de Uranso, who had settled a short while ago with his family at Saragossa. Of their griefs and troubles he knew nothing. Interested as I was in them, I found it not very difficult, with the privilege of my calling, high office, and the aid of our confidentials, to find out their whereabouts, and then had them summoned to my presence. Nor did they offer any obstacles after the first introduction, seeing what lively interest I took in their affairs, to tell me the following story of their clouded lives. The sum and substance of it was this, as related by the signora:—

“Several months ago there appeared at their house a mysterious stranger, who repeatedly and secretly met with my husband. The soldierlike-looking, young and handsome man had brought letters of introduction and fine credentials from important personages, and soon was at home in our family circle. His fine, gentlemanly deportment, insinuating manners, with an often far-away, troubled look, spoke of deep-seated sorrow and disappointment, imbuing us with that peculiar sympathetic interest so appealing to the tender female heart. He was, no doubt, a person of some importance in disguise; never came till nightfall, was extremely wary in the confidential interviews with de Uranso, who treated him with great deference and respect. Spite of my repeated

importunities I could learn nothing of their secret objects, but soon noticed that our former impecuniosity was changed into much better circumstances, we becoming now flush with money. Our newly found friend had introduced himself as Don Gomez. While he never in any social intercourse showed the first approach to any affectionate intimacy, too late I found out that my daughter, Señorita Raphaello, inexperienced, unsophisticated as she was, had fallen violently in love with our visitor. You know such things do not often escape the watchful eyes of a mother. When I pressed her for the truth, she, who had never concealed aught from me, owned up with deep blushes and a flood of tears to the state of her feelings. She could not say that he had caused it, or as yet had given the first sign of reciprocating that unfortunate passion. I soothed, as best I could, her pitiful excitement, bade her to be patient and watchful of herself, not to betray to him the emotions which lacerated her heart, and hope for the best. Imagine the havoc the young man made on that very evening when, casually, during the conversation, he spoke of his dearly loved young wife, from whom he was separated by most cruel circumstances, unable to tell how soon both by good fortune might be reunited. I saw Raphaello's face blanch. She exerted all her strength to keep from fainting. At this instant my husband and two other chevaliers entered. We were bidden to retire to our dormitory, as they had business of great importance during the night. Nothing could have been more welcome to our state of feelings than the solitude of our chamber. Here, without speaking a word, the girl fell into my arms and we wept together; she so violently that I was afraid she would go into convulsions. But my caresses and the power of exhausted nature made her finally more composed, and toward morning

she fell into a deep, uneasy sleep. I laid her carefully upon the couch, watching anxiously till the first dawn of morning broke through the windows. From my deep reveries, caused by looking at the dark future of my poor child, whose filial affection and irreproachable conduct had often been, in the most trying circumstances, my only solace, I was aroused by the sudden return of my husband. I was aware he had been absent all night with his visitors. When he now entered I was shocked anew by his appearance. He was begrimed in face and hands. His whole attire was disordered. His looks were haggard and staring—actually frightening me. Were my troubles never to end? I hastened to have his bath prepared and make him change his toilet. We sat down alone to breakfast, but he remained silent and preoccupied. To all my anxious questions of what had happened to disturb him so, he pleadingly entreated me to ask no more. Finally, he stated that our good friend Don Gomez sent his farewell to the ladies. Circumstances beyond control made the departure of that person last night necessary, so he could not see us again. My husband now asked for Raphaello; she was to him an idolized object of parental affection. I told him the misfortune which had happened. He hastened to her room. I found him holding her tightly embraced in his arms. Both wept bitterly. I fell down on my knees and prayed. All at once the girl was by my side. With her soft, silvery voice she said:—‘Dearly loved ones, let me change evil into good. The Lord, I see it clearly, directs my path. In His service I will spend the rest of my life as one of the good nuns of the Carmelite couvent; there I will forget my misery. A devout and charitable life is the only fit future for one suffering like me. Help me in this, dear parents, and all will be well.’

“She was interrupted from saying any more by a great noise and tumult in the adjoining streets. From the incoherent cries and wild acclamations we gathered soon the awful news that Father de Epila that very morning and while at mass had been assassinated.

“During the now ensuing excitement, the death and funeral of the sainted martyr, we could take no steps for fulfilling the irrevocable will of our daughter. But we appeal now to you, reverend father, to assist her in taking the veil and be admitted as one of the holy sisters to the cloister.”

Admitting this to be the proper course to be taken by the young lady, I promised my best aid for attaining, as soon as possible, her pious object; but insisted that they must, as soon as reaching home, send to me Don de Uranso.

During the recital of the woman's story I became more and more convinced that I saw the tracks toward a great discovery. This man was either one of the murderers or one of the confederates. There was no doubt in my mind about that fact. I prepared for his coming, which occurred within a short interval. At sight of him I saw pusillanimity and cowardice written in his unprepossessing countenance. I went to work without any roundabout words. Charging him with a guilty knowledge of the crime of murderous assault on the late Grand Inquisitor, I proceeded to say:—

“You, as a good Catholic, must be aware that it is in my power, by means of the torture, to press from you the confession of your guilt.” I saw him shudder under the influence of my eyes, fixed staringly upon him. Then I proceeded:—“Would you not prefer my now proffered kindness, to make a full account of the truth? Look at yonder table. There lie twenty thousand ducats, the offered reward for

this discovery of the criminals ; there is also a paper, as you must see, containing the full pardon and entire Church immunity for the informer if implicated in the affair himself. Lastly, there is a commission as warden-general in our cathedral at Segovia, with an annual salary of five thousand piasters, and this for life, as an additional reward, if you place me in possession of all the details I shall require. Now take your choice."

The fellow walked to the table. He viewed the heap of gold—a mite only from the millions confiscated at the death of Count Suson. He examined the papers carefully, as if this was simply a business transaction. Then, nodding his vile head approvingly, he returned to me and asked:—"What is it that you wish to know, conditionally of my accepting the proposal?" I replied:—"The unequivocal, positive answer to the following questions:—

"(1). Who and where are the four assassins?"

"(2). Who and where are the members of the conspiracy?"

He continued to say:—"Will you swear to me and kiss the crucifix hanging from your girdle, that every promise made shall be sacredly and inviolably kept if I answer these queries?"

I rose and swore, kissing the cross, fully determined to keep my promise, if necessary, as a cheap price for the object to be attained. I now seated myself at the table and made ready to write. He dictated:—

"There were four assassins:—Juan de Esperando, our leader; Juan de Abadia, who committed suicide this very morning; Don Gomez, a stranger, who succeeded in making his escape into France, his whereabouts now unknown, and myself, who, however, took no active part in the attack."

I knew the fellow lied in the last statement, but

did not care, and asked :—“ And now, what about your confederates ? ”

“ I have a full list in writing at my house. Send for servants to carry the gold to my abode ; take yourself the two papers and come with me. We will exchange there the documents and complete the bargain.” I assented readily to the proposition, and in less than half an hour the conditions of the ominous contract were fulfilled on both sides.

Before night Juan de Esperando was a prisoner in the deepest dungeon of the cathedral. When taken captive in the presence of his wife and family, the executioner, with his horrible axe, chopped off the hands and feet of the resistless man. By chains wound around his body, the alguazils dragged him through the streets, amidst the hooting and shouting of the wrathful throng following the sickening sight. Next morning he hung suspended from the high tower of the sacred edifice, strangled to death. Over two hundred implicated accomplices, enumerated on the surrendered list now in my possession, were without delay apprehended, tortured and sentenced to be burned at the next ensuing *auto da fe*. More than double that number were cast into prison for life. Among these were some of the highest nobility, *grandees*, princes of the Church and several women. The amount of confiscated estates and treasures is beyond computation.

Amidst all these havocs, one morning the solemn strains of the cathedral organ sounded grandly through the vaulted edifice. An immense concourse of people had assembled to witness one of the greatest displays of the Church. Priests and acolytes ran hither and thither—all was commotion and expectancy. The great bell rang out deep tones, when a long train of Carmelite nuns were ushered in. They led among their numbers a young and beautiful

maiden. It was Raphaello de Uranso, who this day took the final vow of chastity, charity and priestly sisterhood. "Gloria in excelsis Deum!" chanted at last the powerful choir, and all was over. The heart and life of a young being were immured forever in the gloomy cell of a nun. While the pageantry proceeded, in their usual pew sat the parents. The mother, bathed in tears, could barely hold out through the trying ceremonies. The father, leaning his head forward, looked on steadily and absent-mindedly. His wife had to remind him at last that the people had departed and that it was time to go home. Home! it was such, alas! no longer. The joy and life which had hitherto reigned there supreme by a loved child was now empty. True, accursed wealth and hateful ease had lately entered, but happiness had departed. Whatever their gloomy cogitations were, they presently became aroused by a knocking at the door. There entered an officer and two minions of the Inquisition. Both husband and wife were now taken into custody. To all the urgent protestations of Uranso that this must be a mistake, that he had documents to show his immunity from prosecution, there was but one answer:—"The Inquisition makes no mistakes! There is no immunity from crime!"

The woman fainted. She and her husband were transported to the galleys. Their possessions were confiscated. They both died before reaching the penal colonies. Had tombstones been erected to their memory, well might the monument be inscribed with the truth:—"The Church never relinquishes what was once her own!"

Section VIII.—The Expulsion of the Jews.

When the end of the year approached (1489), the murder of Petro Arbuez de Epila, second Grand Inquisitor at Saragossa, was fully punished and avenged. Hecatombs of human beings and rivers of people's blood flowed, to constitute a warning example to the foes and opponents of the holy tribunal. The king and the priests united, by means of the unsuccessful conspiracy, to foist the dreaded Inquisition on all parts of the land. The dead prelate was declared a martyr to the holy cause. A marble statue had been already erected on the very spot where the assassination took place, and the faithful came in scores to pray at the feet of their saint. Among the most zealous and frequent of these was the nun Raphaello. Poor creature! The cell of the cloister, with its loneliness and devout routine, had not quelled the deeply wounded heart; and to her already overburdened mind came the death of father and mother—natural reasons, and not the real ones, being assigned to her as the cause of that catastrophe; her brain becoming disordered and she changed into a religious monomaniac. In her wild ecstasies she would kneel for hours in prayer before the image of the now sainted Epila. Here she had trances and visions. One day when a crowd of worshippers were assembled, she suddenly sprang to her feet; then, with a trembling voice, echoing through space, she exclaimed, "Behold the heavenly revelation! I see the martyr saint standing before the throne, between the Father and the Son! I hear his voice! This is what he proclaims, 'Know, all faithful children of the Church, judgment day is nigh! The righteous will enter into glory; the wicked shall perish by fire! My servants of the holy tribunal shall fulfil it! Hail to all who strengthen their hands! Woe

to him, in torments of eternal hell, who shall oppose their power!"

Then she fainted and had to be carried away. A priest cried out:—"A miracle!" and the wild rabble shouted after him, "A miracle! a miracle! Heaven itself has sat in judgment!" The torture and *auto da fé* were proclaimed now from Above to be consecrated.

Raphaello, the Carmelite nun, died that same day in a fit of crazy exhaustion. She, too, was soon declared one of the beatified.

Among the many victims who were hunted down in consequence of the priest's murder, a not inconsiderable number were taken from their refuge places, with incontestable signs that they had received succor and protection from the Jews. This was so cunningly done that their guilt could not be legally established. But suspicion, with her cruel fangs in these times, was tantamount to proof. Moreover, it had long been known that there existed between the unconverted Israelites and the Marraunen, sympathy and even fraternal relations, exercised in greatest secrecy. It is ascribed to this influence that the New Christians were well informed in the religion of their ancestors, and knew its ritual in all instances. This they observed in the silence of the night; they were unquestionably provided with the requirements by former co-religionists. Hebrew books, meat killed by the authorized "Shochet," bread for pass-over (Matzo), could be found among the baptized converts regularly and in due season. This did not cease even when the Jews were banished to the Ghetto and placed under strictest surveillance by special order of the throne. Exaggerated complaints concerning the treachery laid to the already hated outcasts were made to the Queen, who still remained under the fanatical influence of her confessor, Fer-

nando de Talavera, the reverend bishop of Avila. Neither the protestations of her high clergy nor the promptings of her own inclination had thus far resulted in any decisive steps against my arch enemies. The influence which some of the magnates of the tribe wielded with the King, as well as with the Queen, had frustrated the frequently attempted measure of persecution against them. In this it was especially Don Isaac Abarbanel who proved the greatest stumbling-block in my destructive designs. Implicitly trusted for sagacity in council, reliability and shrewdness as a financier, and matchless ability as a diplomat, he had served the court well, enjoyed the unbounded confidence of the royal pair, and by his amiable character and profound knowledge he had become a special favorite. Not a step of any importance was hitherto taken without being first submitted to him for advice and approval. Marks of greatest esteem and gratitude were showered continually upon the unpretending and modest man, who belonged even to the inner family circle of the imperial household. Here the children, most of all, were affectionately attached to their "Hebrew grandfather," as they called him, and as they fondly climbed upon his lap they always examined his side-pockets, where they always were sure to find some goodies or some delicacies in store for them.

Since the final conquest of the Moors, the court had moved to New Granada. The unexpected, complete and glorious victory, in which the Queen played so conspicuous and heroic a part, gave their royal majesties at last possession of that magnificent Oriental palace, unequalled in beauty, the Alhambra. No European had ever set eyes upon such a pile of marvellous grandeur, massive strength and sublime architecture. The walls of the extensive fortification were built of the peculiar red porphyry

found in the neighboring quarries. This color gave the place its name as the red castle. It is situated in the midst of noble woods, surrounded by splendid gardens which are full of blooms and foliage all the year round. It contains everything that may contribute sumptuously to the security and the gratification of human wants and most refined tastes. Several regiments of soldiers guarded from the ramparts and numerous towers the stronghold. The place was thronged now with the most handsome of women and the stateliest of men, who in the wealth of color and material of their characteristic national costumes formed the grandest spectacles as they promenaded through the gorgeous hall of the Lions or that of the Abencerrages. The former is the grand apartment of the palace. It has its name from the splendid fountain supported by a master-group of lions; it is constructed entirely of marble and alabaster, and ornamented with the most delicate fretwork and arabesques. The hall of the Abencerrages is still more remarkable for its grandeur and elaborate wealth. The ceilings are of cedar-wood inlaid with mother of pearl, ivory and silver, and the walls are stuccoed and frescoed with the most elegant and intricate designs. An endless multitude had followed hither in the train of the King and the Queen. Notable among these were seen going to and fro, Abarbanel, the Bishop of Avila, and Torquemada. I had been summoned, also, to come and assist in the great scheme now concocting, and had arrived lately. Quickly observing what was going on, I noticed that the old Hebrew frequently bought some choice fruits at one of the stalls lining the portals of the fort, and was, on inquiry, informed that these were the gifts with which he generally regaled the royal children. After due consultation with my approving confreres, I bribed the vendor, an old Spanish woman, to assist in the

trick for the plot which I had concocted. There had arrived for her a most tempting basket of oranges which certainly would attract the attention of her old customer. In one of the golden-looking fruit I placed, skilfully hidden inside, a little image of the crucified Christ. My design proved successful. This orange came on the self-same morning in possession of the young Crown Prince, at the hands of Abarbanel. The child on opening the fruit found the figure, and ran with it to his mother. She blanched and trembled at the sight of it, but spoke no word and appeared as if she took no notice of the incident. She placed the crucifix in her bosom and sent the child away. Soon, however, she dismissed, apparently as affable as usual, him who had still held audience thus far with her as confidential minister, the Jew. Had he seen the wicked glances of her eyes as they followed him he would have known the ominous storm which was brewing for him and his hapless people. They and their high protector had already become burdensome to the court. The war was over and the court council no longer needed him. The royal treasury, now gorged to repletion with the spoils from the conquered Moors and the confiscation of the treasures of the Marranen, had no use for an able financier. Incessant and loud had been the clamors of the hierarchy against the Jews. All neighboring countries had expelled them, and Spain, the most Catholic, should no longer harbor those infidels and heretics. They were continually in league with the vacillating New Christians, drawing them back to the religion of their fathers, and even corrupting the faithful with their money and example. The sovereigns had long hesitated and resisted the priestly demands. But now the Queen, in her outraged, pious feeling of having such gross sacrilege committed before her

eyes in the very bosom of her family, sent for the King and the three Grand Inquisitors. The tears of the Queen, as she related the outrage, and the specific vehemence of Torquemada, which was overpowering on this occasion, settled the matter. Instantly the decree of the expulsion of the Jews from all their majesties' realms was signed and sealed. It had been prepared long ago by Bishop Talavera. Special heralds were dispatched to officially proclaim the edict. Their trumpets and voices startled first the inhabitants of Grenada. Here a large number of wealthy and influential Israelites resided. These were struck with consternation and dismay. They congregated forthwith in their ancient synagogue, one of the oldest of the Occident. They wept, they prayed to the God of their fathers and threw themselves, in their despair, prostrate to the ground. When now Abarbanel entered, all eyes were upon him. He was their only hope. Counselling resignation and patience, he sent from their midst to all the courtiers and grandees who thus far had been his friends. He asked the immediate attendance of all these at the court, to be present during an audience which would be solicited by him from the sovereigns. And those so invited hastened to the palace. The audience was granted. Kneeling before the throne of their majesties, with broken voice interrupted by his sobs, and with a flood of tears bathing his venerable face, he pleaded for his people and entreated the revocation of that terrible mandate. The Kings showed signs of a favorable consideration by the fabulous sums of money offered. The Queen was visibly moved by the pathetic and stirring appeal. Both consulted in whispers together, their countenances showing that strong feelings were agitating their minds to grant the request.

At this instant Torquemada entered the audience

chamber and pushed forward through the crowd until he stood right before the throne. In his right hand he held a large ivory cross. Approaching as near as he could, he violently threw the crucifix at the feet of the sovereigns, and with his sharp, shrill voice raised almost to a screech, he exclaimed: "Judas sold Christ for thirty pieces of silver; do you now sell your Master for three hundred thousand ducats of these Jews?"

It was an awful moment. The Inquisitor-General stalked with haughty mien and proud bearing back, passing through the portals whence he had entered. After an oppressive silence, the cowed King took the almost fainting Queen by the hand. They descended from the throne. The audience was broken up. The terrible edict remained in force.

Torquemada and the Inquisition had prevailed. On the third of August, 1492, three hundred thousand people, men, women and children, with what little portable property remained for them from their despoilers, left Spain, the land which they so unmeasurably loved, where were the graves of their ancestors since a thousand years, where they had been born, suffered and labored. It was again the calamitous day of their national misfortunes, the ninth of the fifth lunar month "Av," when these people had to take the staff of the exile and the outcast. Twice had been the Temple of Jerusalem laid in ashes, and over and over again had the most awful evils overtaken them on that self-same day of lamentation and tears. It must be recorded here to their everlasting credit that they did not selfishly abandon one another. The rich, now reduced to poverty, shared what little there remained for them with their needy brethren. And although citizenship, honor and restored wealth were held out to all who would abjure their religion and submit to bap-

tism, not one of all those so cruelly tried, turned traitor by joining the Church. It was heartrending to see whole congregations, a few days before their departure, pass the time in the cemeteries and mingle their tears with the dust where their fathers slept in death. Many persons tore out the gravestones and actually carried them along into their banishment. Monuments too heavy to be thus transported were presented to the Marrannen under promise of careful preservation. When at last the hour struck for the departure, the rabbins headed the trains. Drums and fifes preceded the weeping procession to encourage those who would have sunk by the roadside in despair. Such a spectacle the world never had seen before and perhaps will witness nevermore. The pestilence stalked ahead of the expatriated and soon destroyed them by the thousands. Spain's degeneration and national decay they left behind.

Section IX.—The Dawn of the Light Afar.

Columbus at last prevailed. In the hour when he thought himself abandoned by men and even God, at the very depth of his misery, the crisis in his fate came. Giving up all hopes of receiving countenance from the throne of Spain, after waiting till his heart grew sick, he started for a new effort, and went for this purpose on his way, bound for the court of France. Firmly resolved now to cast his future fortune with the powerful and magnanimous Charles VIII., who, just victorious over all his enemies, entered in triumph his capital, Paris, the disappointed Genoese sea-captain had made final disposition of his affairs in Spain and proceeded on his problematical errand. His financial means were almost exhausted. What little there remained he left with his beloved Beatrice, whom he pleaded for

protection in the care of his eldest son by his first wife, Diego Columbus, and well-trying friend Louis de Torres. Proceeding on foot with his four-year-old son Ferdinando, born to him by his mistress; carrying the child mostly on his back, he was on his way to his brother-in-law, Pedro Correo, who lived now in the town of Huelva, and who had generously offered to take care of the boy. All day the father had tramped on that very road. His money had given out entirely that morning, and, nearly famished, he reached at nightfall the ancient convent of La Rabida, belonging to the Franciscan friars. He stopped at the gate and asked one of the friars for a little bread and water for himself and his little, hungry child. While receiving this humble refreshment, the prior of the cloister, Father de Marchena, happened to pass by, and was struck with the distinguished appearance of the stranger. Observing from his air and accent that he was a foreigner, he entered into conversation with the traveller and soon learned the particulars of his story. The prior was a man of extensive information. He had considerable knowledge of geographical and nautical science. He was greatly interested by the conversation of this dust-begrimed guest and struck with the grandeur of his views. It was a remarkable occurrence in the monotonous life of the convent to have a man of such singular character, intent on so extraordinary an enterprise, applying here for bread and water.

When he found, however, that the voyager was on the point of abandoning Spain to seek patronage at the court of France, and that so important an enterprise was about to be lost forever to Spain, the patriotism of the good friar took alarm. He detained Columbus as his guest, and, diffident of his own judgment, sent for a learned friend. It was the celebrated Garcia Fernandez, a physician of the neigh-

boring city, Palos, who was summoned hither. Fernandez was equally enchanted with the appearance and conversation of the stranger. Several consultations took place, to which a number of well-experienced sailors from the neighborhood were invited to be present. Among these was an important personage, the wealthy and widely known mariner, Martin Alonzo Pinzon. The project demonstrated by the poor wayfarer was treated here with a deference which had been sought in vain among the sages and philosophers of the court. Pinzon especially became so enthusiastic, fully convinced by the lucid and feasible plans, that he offered to engage in them with purse and person, ready to bear the expenses for a renewed application to the court.

Prior Perez was confirmed in his faith by the concurrence of those learned and practical counsellors. He once had been confessor to the Queen and knew that she was always accessible to persons of his holy calling. But first he selected a trusty messenger in the person of one Sebastian Rodriguez, whom he sent with an urgent and explanatory letter to the royal camp. Isabella was favorably impressed with the writing, and replied that she thanked her old friend for the great service rendered, requesting that the old confessor should immediately repair to the court, and that Columbus should rest in confident hope, as he should hear from her. There was great joy in the little junta at the convent. The warm-hearted friar, after a little preparation, had his mule saddled and departed before midnight on his mission. On arriving, he was met by the Inquisitor-General and myself, the third Grand Inquisitor. De Talavera, who had in the interim been appointed in the place of the dead second Grand Inquisitor, would, however, have nothing to do with the discoverer's schemes, as he was utterly opposed from

religious and scientific prejudices to Columbus, and therefore had systematically abstained from making any report concerning the labors of the learned conclave held under his presidency at Salamanca, now over a year ago. By our intercession, in connection with his priestly standing, Father Perez gained ready entrance to a court distinguished for religious zeal, and soon was in the presence of the Queen, and permitted, by the sacred relations he held to her, great freedom of counsel. The results of the meeting were favorable. Columbus was recalled to the palace,—and after many difficult negotiations, the Queen from her own treasures, a large share of which had come from the confiscations of the Marrannen and Jews, agreed to furnish the necessary ships and equipments for the so long-cherished journey of discovery in the West.

At last, after endless difficulties and troubles in procuring them, three small vessels, the Pinta, Santa Maria and the Nina, lifted anchor in the harbor of Palos on the 3d of August, 1492. What proud satisfaction the commander-in-chief of this little flotilla must have felt as he stood on his flagship, the Santa Maria, conqueror of all the difficulties which had been thrown in his way, now ready to proceed to sea! He had been joined by his life-long friend, the Jew Louis de Torres, who brought him an affectionate farewell of beloved Beatrice and prayerful messages from both his sons. As he stood there at the helm, Alonzo Pinzon, captain of the Nina, by his side, and surrounded by the officers, pilots and sailors, a large concourse of peasants and mariners had gathered on shore. Prior Juan Perez and a number of clergymen, myself included, who came expressly for the occasion, celebrated high mass, and most fervent invocations were sent up to heaven for the success of the perilous voyage and the safe return of

the brave sailors. Everything being now ready, the last signal being given, the ships steered out of the harbor, a favorable wind filled the sails and the little flotilla soon was out of sight.

Oh! that I could have peered into the far-away future and had known the ominous consequences of this auspicious event! Better I had hurled all the curses of hell against that enterprise; better I had sunk ships and men to the very bottom of the ocean than permit what they but a few months hence achieved—to find, as anticipated, a new world. Who would have thought it? On the self-same morning when these ships, these three insignificant caravels, steered West, the three hundred thousand exiled Jews wandered south, east and north, with broken hearts—poverty, despair and hunger in front of them, death and destruction in their wake. It was indeed a “Ninth of Av!” Would one have not been considered a raving maniac who, in the depth of such misery, could have cried out over the outcasts, as did the prophet of old:—“Console ye, oh console ye, my people, saith the Lord your God.” “The people that walk in the darkness shall yet see a great light.”

Section X.—Tomaso Torquemada.

The thread of these episodes would not be complete were I not to follow to the end one of the chief means which, with fiery zeal and fanatic enthusiasm, was instrumental in furthering my mission of repressing the rights of the people, my third great agency by which to kill thought—“the Holy Inquisition.” With Torquemada at the head of such an institution, the Church was no longer the loving, kind and true mother, but the veritable Moloch which devoured a large number of its own children, with an insatiable thirst for blood. The

Inquisitor-General started a reign of terror which should last for centuries, extend to all lands and zones, and apparently, to all intents and purposes, make the power of the altar so supreme and strong as to prop the thrones wherever and whenever it was necessary.

During the fourteen years of this terrible man's official power he had burned at the stake, hanged on the gallows and tortured to death not less than ten thousand unrepentant victims, and as many more were sent to the galleys. With this number of his sacrifices and the expulsion of a half of a million of Jews and Moors, he inflicted on Spain, his own native country, a malediction which coming ages will not be able to remove. Her dominant culture, reign of supremacy on land and sea, her pride and valor, her flourishing commerce and trade—all have crumbled away as if Heaven's blight had struck her.

From the haughty pride of her nobility to the peasants, heretofore the distinguished character of that beautiful semi-tropical clime, the inhabitants became pusillanimous, cowardly and timid. All this illustrates the truth proclaimed by the poet:—

“ Lie is an arrow, turned by heaven's force
To strike its marksman in its backward course.”

It proved even so to the person and state of mind of the arch-persecutor. As he swept onward in his unflinching course, and as he grew older in cruelty and years, fearful apprehensions of imaginary dangers took hold of him. Suspicion filled his heart and soul. He dared not eat, fearing poison in his food. He could not sleep, for the rustle of the leaves stirred by the winds alarmed him. He saw in every man an assassin, in every woman an avenger of her wrongs. Even little children fright-

ened him if they noisily and boisterously passed his road. A mounted body-guard of fifty familiars and two hundred on foot had to accompany every step he made in public. The least ailment set him frantic with apprehension of death. Under these circumstances his body dwindled away, so that he was nothing but skin and bones. The coward was intensely superstitious, too. Spirits and sprites haunted him day and night. The ghosts of those whom he had caused to find untimely ends tormented his ever-vivid imagination, dying over and over again before him in their convulsions, pangs and expiring gasps. All this certainly hastened the hour that he should be called to his last account. How he whimpered and wept, prayed and cursed as he realized that the inevitable end was at hand! It was pitiful to see him squirm and wriggle in his last throes. As I stood there by his bedside, the only friend left him on earth, as the last breath left his lips, and his eyes were already broken, I could not help but exclaim at his failing, ebbing strength:—
Sic semper tyrannis!

PHANTASMAGORIA XVIII.

THE ART OF ARTS.

It would be folly to follow in detail all the workings of that dread machinery, started with such powerful effect, first in Spain and then throughout all lands and principalities within its reach. The never satiated maw of the Inquisition continued henceforth and for centuries to come to glut itself with countless human beings of all conditions and every sphere of life.

Would it not seem that with the four almost omnipotent agencies, "intoxicating drink, gunpowder, the unrelenting Church tribunal, and the false Blood-accusation," a complete realization of my heinous mission should be attained? That the sceptre and the mace were forever firmly established in their supreme sway over the usurped domain of the persons and consciences of their helpless vassals? That truth, justice and freedom, to all apparent ends, were gasping with fluttering, waning pulse, which seemed to be the last throes of dissolution? Who could, who dared, snatch from me the sure and inevitable victory for the overshadowing empire of tyranny and superstition?

And yet, while I revel in my unbounded successes in the Pyrenean Peninsula, dreaming of the universal rule of the despots and fanatics, and concocting new plans and schemes for the speedy attainment of my ambition, nearly all was upset and effectually crushed by some mechanical device, invented at the little German town of Mentz by a person whose name had never been mentioned anywhere before; working in a dingy and retired back office, in one of those small rows of houses which any traveller would pass as being beneath the dignity of even casual observation.

How often, in my long and baneful career, have I received the lesson that an all-overruling Providence for the achievement of the grandest purposes avails itself of instrumentalities deemed by the unsophisticated beholder as too insignificant to be even worthy of notice. The little springs that bubble out of the bosom of mother-earth form the globe's great rivers; and the passing spark which zigzags from a fleeting cloud causes a conflagration which devours the giant trees of the forest and lays in ashes in a moment the teeming, stirring, bustling cities which

took the hands of man ages to build. Thus in human affairs often the most minute causes produce effects entirely out of proportion to their apparent possibilities.

There was no longer any necessity for my presence in Spain. The Inquisition was so effectually established, its advocates and representatives so zealous and watchful, and its success so phenomenally great, that I deemed it by far more advisable to travel northward for the introduction of this system among the different nationalities of the continent. On this mission I reached the city of Mentz (Mainz).

I had been here before. About forty years ago, when bound southward, I had visited the resident bishop, bearing letters of introduction and high recommendation. I was then received with most cordial welcome and great hospitality. At that time, in the course of our conversation the prelate mentioned to me that he had among the members of his diocese a curious and remarkable family, whom he invited me to visit. He had called there before, seemed greatly interested in the workings going on there, and so at the appointed time we started together. I remember the circumstances so vividly because of so unusual a nature. Our road lay through the shabbiest quarter of the town, inhabited mostly by day laborers and petty tradesmen. At last we reached an alley, a dingy *cul-de-sac*, and stopping at the very extremity, knocked at a low door, being admitted by an old but venerable-looking lady. The poorly furnished room which we entered appeared clean and tidy, the floor being strewn with white sand, and the little furniture, polished or oiled, placed with good order and taste. Steam, however, and the smell of soapsuds filled the space, and as soon as we became accustomed to the semi-light prevailing, I saw in one of the corners a buxom-looking

young woman at a tub engaged in washing clothes. Even under the unfavorable circumstances, I noticed the remarkably fine appearance of this busily engaged person. On our entrance she discontinued for a moment and made us a reverent courtesy, immediately afterwards wiping the perspiration from her white, shining brow and then resumed her work. She was a type of German beauty, with characteristic rosy cheeks, large blue eyes and flaxen hair. The bare arms, round and full, dripped with water; their regular movement of washing displaying the exquisite contour of her bust and form. The bishop walked straight up, and chucking her familiarly under her round chin, asked:—"How is our good Gretchen to-day?" Smiling, and with a clear and euphonious voice, she answered:—"Very well, your Reverence; helping mother as usual! She will show you to the workshop, where father, my husband and Faust are busy in their work at the new invention." The old lady led the way, the bishop saying to me, "This is Mrs. Schoeffer, the best little wife and daughter!" As I bowed to her she gracefully returned my greeting, without, however, stopping in her labor. We were soon ushered into the "Werkstatt" (shop). It was a gloomy, smoke-be-grimed, littered-up place, looking more like an old laboratory than a mechanic's shop. As we entered, the men, who were busily engaged with the work, stopped and came forward to greet their visitors. They were introduced to me by my host:—Johannes Guttenberg, Johannes Faust, and Peter Schoeffer, all natives of this ancient burgh. A peculiar trio they formed. Nature could not well have moulded them with stronger characteristics concerning the purposes and objects in which they were associated. Old Guttenberg stood out most prominent among his partners. The thoughtful Teuton's

face, with broad forehead, strongly marked features and sunken eyes, became still more pronounced by the long silver-white hair falling in profusion down his shoulders. Faust was the picture of craft, cunning and wily schemes. Unusually tall, slim and cadaverous-looking, with dark complexion, sharp, piercing eyes and hooked nose, his character was so distinctly stamped upon him as to be read at sight. Schoeffer was the embodiment of the "Gute Deutsche Michel" (good Dutch Mickel). Broad-shouldered, rosy, fat and smiling, he alone wore the peculiar knitted "Night mütze" (bell-cap) with its overlapping points, while the others had paper caps upon their heads, such as laborers generally make for themselves. These men were engaged in a work which seemed to me of the most puerile and trifling nature. They looked more like wayward children at play with self-constructed toys, than earnest, hard-laboring persons intent on earning a living. The old fellow hammered away and labored hard over a big machine that would not work at all. He called it "a press" required, according to his statement, to have an easy forward and backward movement. Turning in every direction, except that which was wanted, he would fuss and fume over it as if for life. The others were cutting little sticks of wood, carving letters on the top of each. These experiments must have been somewhat costly too, and Faust, being the only one possessed of some means, had to furnish the money not only for this work, but also for the support of his companions and their families. They would not reveal to us what they were really about, stating that we were the only visitors ever allowed on the premises. Nor could we guess in the least the object of their efforts. The only thing so far accomplished were some pretty fairly executed paste-board playing-cards, which they had successfully printed on their machine.

When asked my opinion by the bishop concerning the likelihood of any great results from the travail of these people, I laughed at the seriousness of his mien, and told him that the country was full of such dreamers and idiosyncratic speculators, who would by some impossible mechanical contrivance set the world topsy-turvy. So they have tried to find the philosopher's stone which is to change lead into gold; so they have searched for the elixir of life to drive death from the world! Demented people have wasted days and nights attempting to construct flying-machines. Nay, they have experimented in the use of steam from boiling water for a motive power, and in the harnessing of those mysterious, inexorable natural principles called by various names—electricity, magnetism and other kinds of fabled “isms”—to their service and use. Let us keep away from these latitudinarians, many of whom become dangerous to the state and church, by revolutionary thoughts concerning the conservative laws which must rule forever the masses of men. Suppose our three half-crazed friends could contrive to print. All that they would then accomplish might be to interfere with our copyists and illuminators, taking the bread from these hard-working scribes. Whatever the mind has thought and thinks was written and must be written by the hand. All efforts to avoid this are against the rules of nature and amount to nothing. With these specious arguments we reached the episcopal residence.

When seated comfortably at the table of mine host, with the fine Rhine wine of a scarce and old vintage before us, he said:—“I told you that the people whom we visited were of a curious and remarkable family. Let me relate to you some of their history. Guttenberg is an old enthusiast on the subject of his contrivance, which he holds absolutely secret. Having

spent some of his earlier years, days and nights with experimenting, and making no headway here, he left one day and turned up in Paris. His wife and only daughter had to shift for themselves, as he left nothing for their support. All he had was this little shanty; this at least gave them a shelter. The mother took in washing and sewing for the neighbors, in which she was bravely assisted by the daughter, who was handsome, cheery and uncomplaining. But Gretchen soon had two suitors—a rich one, who lavished a good many favors on her. This was Johannes Faust. He was allowed to come and go, with but little encouragement in his love-affairs, as the girl showed a decided antipathy for him, and it was only to please her mother, who saw a good match in the odd old bachelor, that she permitted his visits. The other was Peter Schoeffer, a fine mechanic, who earned enough to live comfortably, well able, with his moderate means and by his industry, when the time should come, to support a wife. He was good-natured, jovial, and so affectionately attentive to the girl, so patient with the whims of the old lady, who discouraged his frequent coming by sour remarks, that it was soon obvious that Faust with his money had very little chance in his wooing. The fellow stood in very bad repute anyhow. His mysterious air and not too attractive appearance, with a somewhat condescending mode of speech, spread the report that he got his riches by practising the black arts, and old Babbles, a specially favored busybody in the ward, positively asserted, with the index finger striking the sides of her nose and the head shaking with that confidential nod peculiar to her class, that the fellow frequently smelled of sulphur—a sure sign that he had been in the company of the Evil One. Faust himself saw that he was at a disadvantage, and now had recourse to a bold stroke of

stratagem. He hurried to Paris and hunted out the father, trying to bribe the old man with gold to exert paternal authority over his daughter. Guttenberg, having made fair progress in his schemes, but sorely in need of funds, was, however, of that true, honest German stock who could not be bought nor cajoled into any wrong. 'My daughter,' he answered, 'marries whom she loves, and were he as poor as Job, if need be I would support both'—although he had not supported anybody—barely himself—for the last ten years. After Faust had bought a lot of trinkets and truck with which to dazzle his sweetheart, he and the father hied back to Mentz to let Gretchen decide for herself. But there was no need of hurry. Schoeffer, though otherwise obtuse, seeing the trick of his rival, persuaded the girl to clandestinely marry him. So they appeared one afternoon, all by themselves here at the rectory, while I was busily engaged in some official duty. It was the most laughable sight imaginable to see them enter—the girl in advance, the timid booby following, with the fingers of one hand stuck in his mouth, with the other holding shyly on to her skirt. She did all the talking, he simply nodding his head, which dripped with perspiration. I had seen the girl frequently. Not having paid any special attention, she always appeared to me one of those modest, shrinking young females who would not do anything extraordinary and out of the usual way of her sex. So they got married, and to the credit of the young husband it must be said he paid a handsome fee, which he however tremblingly handed to his bride to be passed to me. The news spread quickly through all the parish. The mother when she at last learned of the marriage, fumed and fretted a good deal at first, but, seeing that the inevitable had come, soon reconciled herself to the fact. When the two travellers

came home there was a scene. The father was very angry and boisterous; but when Faust made some sneering and disparaging remarks about pauper-marriages, Schoeffler jumped at him in righteous indignation and pounded and beat him well. The old man, who was himself of a chivalrous nature, was filled with respect and admiration for his son-in-law, took both men by the hands and restored peace and tranquillity in the house. Now Faust, withal, had really and truly loved Gretchen, and although disappointed and chagrined, seeing that matters could not be changed, gave her generously all the presents he had brought from Paris. For reasons the world could not understand, he now remained with the family, supporting them with his means, and furnishing Guttenberg with funds for the continuation of his experiments. He and Schoeffler are joined in partnership with the old man, and they work away day in and day out, improving the contrivance. There is a new little girl-baby in that family, and the way that fool Faust carries on with the child is a sight. If he were its own father he could not fondle, caress and fuss more lovingly over the infant. This has made him and Schoeffler bosom friends, although Gretchen has no use for him, and calls her girl's fond admirer, *Ein alter deutscher Narr* (an old German fool)."

Here the bishop ended his quaint story, and after a good laugh over the curious and remarkable relations in that house, having emptied quite a number of cups of the precious old wine, we both retired. I soon after set out on my journey.

Now after these many years I returned to this place. I had given no further thought to the inventors or their invention. The pressure of other affairs had absorbed my attention entirely. Frivolities, as I considered those innovating attempts, had

certainly no claim on my time amidst the portentous task of setting the torture and the flaming pyres to do their work against the heretics and infidels. But now here I was back. Assuming a changed and aged appearance, I presented once again my credentials to the bishop, who also had grown hoary and feeble. On explaining to him my momentous mission, for which I asked his zealous co-operation, he recognized the old friend and acquaintance, and extended the former cordial welcome and unbounded hospitality to the returned visitor. When my affairs were fully talked over, he again pressingly invited me to visit our former acquaintances, saying that great surprises were in store for me. After a sumptuous dinner we were driven to our destination. There were indeed marvels of changes presented to my wondering gaze, wrought by the hand of time and favorable circumstances.

The dingy, foul quarter, with its former tumbling-down dwellings, was transformed into fine edifices and palace-like buildings. The narrow, dirty streets, inclusive of the mean *cul-de-sac*, were replaced by broad, well-paved avenues, and the poor and squalid inhabitants had given way to a wealthy, cultured and refined class of citizens. We stopped before one of the finest looking mansions. After rapping repeatedly we were admitted, and on our entrance ushered into the presence of Schoeffer and Faust, who were much pleased to see their old friends again. They welcomed us heartily and quickly called in the now aged Gretchen and a troop of her married and unmarried progeny, inclusive of a crowd of sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, with an endless row of grandchildren. Guttenberg and his wife had long since died; the old man had yet seen the realization of his dreams, having become renowned and comfortably situated as the inventor of

the printing press and movable types. Faust and Schoeffer, as partners and chums, had continued the business.

Back of the residence was an immense stone structure, their factory. They were not so much engaged in printing work themselves as in furnishing types and presses to the many offices already established all over the continent. A little army of employes worked incessantly at bench and furnaces. Nearly three hundred offices, situated in the remotest quarters of the country, received their supplies from here, and orders for the organizing of new ones came in so fast that, in spite of all available working forces, they were continually much behind in satisfying customers. They were engaged in the practical art of printing in another department. We were shown the compositors at work setting type; the pressmen, rolling off sheet after sheet of the prints. These consisted mostly of copies of the Bible or parts thereof. In one corner was stacked up a pile of folios containing the Old and New Testaments in Latin, printed on vellum with types imitating script in form. The book consisted of some 637 leaves, and was the last and only complete work executed by the inventor himself. (The only complete one of these in America is in possession of the Lenox family at New York, costing them \$2,600.) At some of the furnaces the workmen were casting Hebrew types. On inquiry I learned that the men were preparing the means for an early publication of a complete Bible and Talmud in the original languages. Here Faust took me aside, and almost in a whisper said to me:—"I will tell you some secrets which I have imparted to no one as yet. In my younger days I did not get the bride; that was, perhaps, best, for, sooner or later, she and her friends would have learned what no one suspects even now

—that I am a Jew. A goldsmith by trade, like many of my wealthy race, I had gone to Spain on business. While there I thought it best, as help to my enterprise, to join the host of ‘New Christians,’ and prospered greatly. However, persecutions were commenced against those who remained secretly true to the old faith. Then I quietly wound up my affairs and returned here to my native place. When in Paris with the old man Guttenberg I saw the great possibilities which were in store for the genius of that man’s labor. So I remained attached to the family, invested my means for their support and the development of the invention, and, God be blessed, you see how we all have prospered.” The bishop and myself took leave and departed for the rectory. The garrulous prelate kept on talking incessantly, praising in extravagant terms the wonderful achievements we had witnessed. It was well that he did all the conversing, and that only now and then, when asking some approving questions, I was aroused from my painful reverie to return some answer. At last I could retire, and pretending some special religious meditation went into the cathedral. Here, after walking for some time up and down the aisles, I found myself finally standing before the high altar, and almost involuntarily gave vent to my exasperated feelings. I shrieked out, as if with cries from my infuriated soul:—“Accursed fate that follows in my wake; that thwarts every effort of my life! Here, as if over night, has grown up again a giant power which I might have easily strangled but a few decades ago with one blow in that maledicted back office. Short-sighted phantom that I am! who could not see in the pigmy at which I then laughed in scorn and derision, the germ soon to grow into the gigantic proportions which it has attained already and which

will expand to encircle the world, now unchecked and unrestrained! I was so confident that I had gagged and bound the people, had smitten their rights and prerogatives; had propped the thrones securely by the gunpowder, and the Church supremely by the Inquisition; I had revelled in the countless tortured deaths of the maledicted New Christian and the expulsion of the Jews from every land and every zone, and here, by the agency of one mechanical contrivance, all is thrown back—all is at hazard once again! Must I despair? Shall I give up? Never—never—never! Types and press shall not stand in my way! Break them! smash them! printers and books together! To the bottom of eternal confusion with them! They shall not conquer me! Never—never!”

A crescent of light shot as if out of darkness before my eyes. Over the chancel stood in life-size two beautiful pictures, masterworks of ancient art. They were the portraits of Moses and Christ. In my exhaustion I riveted my eyes upon the paintings. Suddenly they seemed imbued with life. Out of the black recess in the background above them stepped the prophet Elijah. It seemed as if the wide space of the immense nave was filled with sunshine and music. The grand organ opposite me thundered out its mighty strains—all combined to echo back my last words—Never! never! never! Some priests coming in late for midnight mass found me lying like one dead at the steps of the altar. They carried me to my apartment. For several days I remained comatose. The doctor forbade all visitors. When I came to life again the first to see me was the good bishop. He had been greatly concerned about the misfortune which had befallen his guest, and genuine gladness beamed from his benignant face when he saw me so far recovered as to be able to sit up.

He recommended that I should keep myself quiet and perfectly comfortable. But nothing soothed and strengthened me more than the news he imparted before leaving:—Faust had gone on some business several days ago to Paris. Black-death had not entirely disappeared from that city. He had on his arrival there fallen as one of its victims, and was dead and buried. Although a little drop of comfort only, there was no use in repining. Soon bidding my host a grateful farewell, I departed for the furtherance of my missionary work, as chief agent of the Inquisition, to another and distant land, awaiting future developments for the annihilation of the devil, of the printer and the demon of the press. I state here, however, as the head advocate of all that is evil, tyrannous, ignorant, false, bigoted and hypocritical, I am more afraid now of the Art of Arts than of all other causes combined.

PHANTASMAGORIA XIX.

THE FIGHT AGAINST THE TALMUD.

Section I.—Dominicans and Franciscans.

My main commission consisted in repairing to the city of Cologne, and there assuming the leadership as chief of the Inquisition of the southern section of the country. The appointment under the high but familiar name of Frater Jacob Hochstratten had been sanctioned in Rome, and the “brevet” therefor had preceded my arrival. So I was received by the superior of the Dominicans with great ceremony and éclat. They had here their wealthiest and most powerful abbeys and domains. But lately they suf-

ferred much by the aggressions of enemies, a rival order known as the Franciscans. The two ecclesiastical bodies at this time (1505) to a large extent represented the spirit of the entire German nation. We, the followers of St. Dominico, considered ourselves the emissaries of every reactionary, conservative principle, and with the wealth and power of ages on our side, were the embodiment of despotism incarnate, holding even sovereigns and popes in awe of our unyielding, tyrannous sway.

The Franciscans were mendicant monks, pledged to poverty and abstinence, closely knitted together in the relations to their order, very numerous and highly popular with the masses of the people. Great scholars and thinkers, they hated our arrogant, ignorant and aristocratic presumption; helped in many instances to humiliate our pride and repeatedly thwarted our ambitious designs and oppressive schemes. They were esteemed at the Vatican and held in great honor by the then reigning Emperor Maximilian. But for this we would long since have utterly crushed these offensive beggar-friars.

Aside from powerful opponents, the conditions under which I assumed my great office were extremely different from those of the "South lands," whence I had come. This was caused by the nearly opposite and diverging characters of the people.

The Spaniard, in general, has very little mind of his own, is superstitiously ignorant, impulsive and easily stirred up, and when once aroused, in his passionate temper is readily led, even in most chimeric plots and enterprises, by the strong will of a master spirit. The German in his true character is of entirely opposite traits. Thoughtful, slow and meditative, the emotional counts for very little in his motives of action, which mainly rest upon reason and unswayable convictions for honesty and truth.

Let no one who wishes to make a correct estimate of this nationality fall into my serious error, to mistake that apparent immovability for stupor, or that seeming want of sentimentality for an absence of humane sympathy. A blinded measurement of such mistaken notions prepared for me all the fatal troubles arising from this period into the long avenues of a calamitous future. I came here with the fallacious idea that this was the land of robber-knights; that the people were coarse and stupid; that every one was a coward when dealing with a superior, and a despot when in the presence of an inferior; that the overawing jurisdiction of the "Fehm" tribunal in its tyranny had extinguished manhood and resistance, and that it required but the heavy arm of the sturdy Chief Inquisitor to carry everything before him and reign supreme over a subservient and abject people. I did not count upon the dormant powers of the genuine Teuton, which, once awakened, would cause a regeneration not dreamed of even by the most sanguine lover of Deutschland. Simplicity of life, a strict morality, uncouth and even brusque, had been well preserved among the masses. Christianity here was yet an ideal and a living religion; while in Rome, Madrid and Paris the educated and advanced laughed at its tenets and despised its priests.

True, it took a mighty rattling to rouse the torpid, easy-going giant. Unfortunate creature that I am! to be myself the bearer and wielder of the prod that should goad these otherwise harmless objects to rise in majesty against their oppressors, and thus once stirred, overwhelm with defeat an adversary deemed until then nearly all-powerful. Such proved the woful result of my ensuing experiences.

The most influential associates who received me at my arrival in Cologne with enthusiastic cordiality,

were the prior Ortimus Gratus, a great literati, widely known for his theological and controversial works; Victor van Karben, his factotum and amanuensis; and Arnold of Tongern, a professor of Dominican theology. As this trio of men play an important role in the portentous events now following, it is meet to give here so much of their biographical notices as will lead to an understanding of their characters.

Gratus was the illegitimate son of a priest, well educated and highly praised by some of his contemporaries as a poet and magister. Feeling keenly the reproach which attached to his birth, it stung him to the quick like a deformity which always sours the disposition of an unfortunate cripple. He became a cynic, hater of man, and among these a most rampant maligner and foe of the Hebrews. When a boy at school, he had once unmercifully beaten a companion of that race, and the whipped fellow in his anger cried out tauntingly the words of Scripture:—"A bastard shall not come into the congregation of the Lord." This decided his character and all future tendencies in his career. He became a monomaniac in the direction of writing books full of wrath against the Israelites, ever endeavoring to prejudice the Christians against them and to raise revolts among the Catholics against the Jewish people. Ignorant concerning the most important data for successful authorship in that direction, he selected as his friend and secretary a renegade Jew, Victor van Karben. This self-styled rabbi had but a smattering of biblical or rabbinical Hebrew, had abandoned wife and three children, in order to follow out his craving for notoriety. Not regarded as anybody among his own, he had recourse to the baptismal font and was welcomed as a great acquisition by the ever-ready proselyting clergy.

Gratius adopted him in his favor and employed the apostate to furnish material from the books of the Jews containing accusations of traducing and vilifying the Christian religion. A volume of bitter charges of this kind had made its appearance under the title of "Life and Fashions of the Jews" (1504). Although thousands of these were distributed gratis they fell flat. It had been written in a clumsy, coarse and vulgar style and found neither readers nor friends. The last one in our trio was Arnold of Tongern. He was, according to the standard of his age, a profoundly learned man, and had been elected as professor of theology at the priestly seminary of our order. His reputation, however, had become a stench in the nostrils of the people, it being generally known that in his youth he had been convicted of a felonious crime. Several Israelites, as eye-witnesses of the dastardly deed, testified in court against him. For this he turned into a life-long, raging Anti-Semite.

And these were the chief people with whose assistance I must stamp out heresy and unbelief in this widely affected territory. Ever since Johannes Huss and the Albigenses, his followers, had been hunted to death, the leaven of their teachings had fermented among all classes of citizens, and while not openly an organized sect, yet large numbers inclined toward liberal principles were known among themselves by the title of "Humanitarians." They had influential adherents everywhere—among the learned and illiterate, the rich and the poor, the high priesthood, nobility, and even among kings and princes down to the mechanics and day-laborers. The Franciscans favored them and obstructed by every means in their power any agency that had been thus far devised against them by my predecessors. Tolerance, a word hitherto stricken out

with bloody hands from the dictionary of the Church, became their boasting watchword, and behind the towers and palisades of Truth was erected for the time being a refuge-place for my eternal enemies and antagonists. Growing intelligence was tired of hunting down, persecuting and butchering people because of belief and differing modes of worshipping God. Here it was not an easy matter any longer to throw fire-brands for outbreaks of Jew-baiting. Germany had been oversatiated with revolting cruelties since the brutalities of the Flagelants, and had practically experienced the damage done in all directions by the merciless havoc. But since my arrival at this place from Mentz I had great and additional reasons to dread a peaceful settlement for the favorable position secured by the hated children of the house of Jacob. Had I not seen with my own eyes in that printing office of Schoeffer and Faust the preparing of publications of their Hebrew Scriptures, and, worst of all, the Talmud? What does this book contain? I know it not! Nor do any one of the many sages and wiseacres among the prelates and doctors of learning, inclusive of my immediate associates, whom I since have consulted. But I know, and they all confirm this, that it was the most sacred and revered book among the Hebrews, who, with singular industry and perseverance, pore over the huge volumes with the rising of each day deep into the night. I was possessed of the idiosyncratic idea that within the leaves of those maledicted tomes were hidden the secrets which had preserved and maintained their existence through all the afflictions and woes which I had brought so plentifully on their devoted heads. Therefore I was determined on war—war to extermination on this well-preserved labyrinth of thought and knowledge. But whence should I get help necessary to accomplish my object?

Section II.—Joseph Pfefferkorn.

In a narrow lane of the Ghetto at ancient Cologne there was one of the usual butcher shops, kept by Joseph Pfefferkorn. He was a broad-faced, dark and sinister-looking man, who had come here several years ago with his spruce, lively and handsome little wife, Brendel, from a small city of the Christian province of Moravia. He boasted to be a direct descendant and pupil of the renowned Rabbi Meyer Pfefferkorn, of Prague. Presenting himself on his arrival before the board of examiners to be licensed as one of the official butchers (Shochet), an office of some considerable religious trust, he was found to have just enough knowledge and technical practice to pass. With the assistance of some benevolent co-religionists, he was enabled, though abjectly poor then, to hire the little shop and establish himself as one of the meat sellers. The little woman took her stand behind the counter and attended to the customers, as her husband was absent from home a great deal. The couple did not live happily together, he being rude and coarse, and she frivolous, inclined to spend a good deal of money on extravagant dress, and not too modestly ogling with the young men of the neighborhood. Both were heard repeatedly quarrelling and had angry altercations; one of the news-mongering women, living close by, even asserted that she heard cries and falling blows toward midnight in that shanty, considered awful among the Jewish people, to whom such an outrage as striking a woman had never been known. And yet the financial affairs of the concern prospered astonishingly, and everybody wondered whence the sources came from, when the dimensions of the store were widened at several periods, and the custom increased in quantity and quality. A fine

pair of horses with a handsome butcher-cart were the latest additions to the establishment. It became soon the envious talk among the dwellers of the quarter, and as nothing succeeds like success, Rabbi Joseph Pfefferkorn, as he loved to have himself called, rose in importance and influence among the congregation. Many whispered about that he was ambitious to be elected at the next session as one of the board of managers. This, however, came to a speedy end. One morning the store was found sealed up by the municipal authorities, and the butcher Joseph was led through the streets in irons between mounted policemen. He had been caught in the middle of the night burglarizing the house of a wealthy citizen and stealing a large sum of money. Suspected for some time of being the author of such recurring crimes, he had lately been closely watched, and, although working with the skill and shrewdness of a professional thief, the eye of the law watched the sinner, and the heavy hand of punishment was now upon him. There ensued a quick trial, and the guilty offender found himself without delay behind the bars of the prison. Brendel, in her trouble and anxiety, went before the rabbi and his assistants, pleading and imploring for help to procure the release of her husband. But there was nowhere sympathy for the case. It was the official and general opinion that if an Israelite so far forgets his honor and becomes a thief, which always casts a black shadow upon all his co-religionists, he should suffer the full penalty of the law, without any meddling of or help from friends or the people. "We pity you in your misfortune and tears," they all said to Brendel, "but will not and must not mix ourselves up with the case. Let the Christians know that we are even more eager to punish any one of ours who commits a crime than they are." So, with-

out a crumb of consolation, she went to the prison and reported to her husband the cruel reception she had received from her own people. Rabbi Joseph, who had been hopeful of relief, fell into a paroxysm of wrath. He swore and raved that he would have revenge on the whole crowd, and that they should rue to the end of their days for keeping one of their own in humiliation and shame.

And he was as good as his word. Early next day he sent to the priory soliciting a visit from the father confessor. As the case seemed to me of some importance I went myself and found my surmise correct. I had, by mere chance, discovered the man I wanted and needed. After expressing my regrets at finding so clever a man in such a bad predicament, he asked if I knew of any possibility by which he might become relieved and his offence condoned. I explained to him that there might be found a way with the Count of Gutenstein, the judge, to obtain pardon, "but the conditions under which I would exert myself for this purpose may seem too hard for you." "And if your reverence please, what are they?" he rejoined. "Foremost of all," I replied, "you and yours must be baptized and become Christians." "Well," he answered, in a cynical, almost-sneering manner, "that cannot be so very difficult, and will not hurt much, will it?" "No, not much," I said, with an involuntary smile, looking the rascal through and through, "but that is not all—do you know anything of the Talmud?" "I know everything about it," he quickly responded, and his eyes actually glistened as he proceeded to say, "and if you Christians were only aware how its pages are full with blasphemy against the founder of your religion and crammed with virulent animosity and hatred toward its professors, the book and its students would not fare well much longer. They ought

to have been burned together long ago." "But the Jews are your brethren," I said, interrupting him. "No longer, your reverence," he almost hissed out; "they have insulted my poor, innocent, pretty little wife, and scorned me in my present condition, instead of helping me." "Ah! is that it?" I exclaimed, as I shook him fervently by the hand, "then you are my man; you seek to be revenged on these cormorants, and shall have it to your heart's content. When admitted to our fold I will take you in my service to tell the whole world what is in that delectable Talmud, and we shall fare ill if the last copy of it is not burned before we have done with it." He rubbed his big, red hands in joyful glee. I could have hugged that convict to my heart. Two subjects better fitted for the satanic work in prospect could not well have been brought together by auspicious fate. Within three months the prisoner, released by my intercession, and his sprightly wife were admitted to the bosom of the Holy Church. Count von Gutenstein and his pious spouse stood sponsors at the altar. Rabbi Joseph was changed into Johannes, and his marital partner into Bertha. They proudly and ostentatiously left the cathedral, and were followed by a large procession of a jubilant mob, moving through the Ghetto, parading themselves to the chagrined and mortified Jews. Next day the new Johannes was installed in his office near the Dominical rectory, and could be seen sitting at a writing desk engaged in his treacherous work. His wife had now, instead of young Hebrews, a host of shaven clericals for admirers, who vied with one another in paying her assiduous attention; and the willing husband, as he pocketed the villanous proceeds, whispered in her ear, "The more the better, only remain true to me!"

Section III.—The M'Shamed at Work.

“M'Shamed” is a loathed name given by the Jews to one of their race who for mercenary purposes forsakes the religion of his forefathers. Nothing in any language embodies in one term such concentrated scorn, virulent disdain and consummate estrangement than this epithet, applied to a speculating convert. It is a universal axiom among the Semitic people that every misfortune which has befallen them through all the eras of their history had its origin and cause through the treachery of some such rascal.

At last Johannes Pfefferkorn had finished the long anticipated manuscript of his labors entitled, “*Hostis Judaerum.*” A printing outfit and skilled laborers had been imported from Mentz, and the typographical work was pressed forward with all possible speed. Two editions, one in Latin and one in German, were issued at once, and as soon as finished distributed over the reading world.

The book was written in a peculiar, aggravating, sarcastic tone, a style of its own, by the author. It arraigned the ancient and modern rabbins of obstinately refusing to acknowledge Christ as the Messiah, nor paying proper reverence to the Madonna and the Saints. It showed, by fulsome quotations torn from their contexts of the Talmud, ignorantly translated and misinterpreted, that stealing, lying and even killing were no sins if committed against non-Israelites. It charged the whole race to be usurers and non-producers, living on the fat of the land at the expense of their hard-working neighbors. It adjured all good Catholics to burn this pernicious literature, including even the Hebrew Scriptures, substituting the Latin Vulgata—especially, however, the accursed Talmud and rabbinical writings, and insisted upon

that the whole Ghetto should peremptorily be compelled to attend mass; that the children of the Hebrews should be taken by force from their parents to be baptized and educated as Christians. It declared it was absolutely necessary to deprive these crucifiers of all their worldly goods, to be confiscated for the benefit of the state and the altar, and that they be forced by the authorities to the lowliest menial labors, to earn their bread by the sweat of their brows. The book closed with the implied asseveration that the old, sage minister of state, Haman, of Persian memory, was right when he asserted a thousand years ago:—

“There is a peculiar people scattered abroad and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of thy kingdom, and their laws are diverse from those of every nation; neither keep they the king’s laws; therefore, it is not for the king’s profit to suffer them.” (Esther iii. 8.)

All this was but the oracular teachings of the hateful Dominicans, printed now by their new mouthpiece, the “M’Shumed.”

Nor did it fail, as all such vituperous literature always will, to create quite a stir among the different classes of readers. Foremost it was highly satisfactory to our sacred order; all the more so, as it had been fathered by one of those Hebrews, the hapless subjects assailed. The learned and thoughtful had a grim laugh at the incongruities and skilfully falsified facts, expressed in language so crude and hobbling, even after painful correction and polish, that it betrayed to them the ignoramus at sight. The mass of general readers did not comprehend at all what these slings and arrows meant, why they were sent forth, and they took very little stock in the book. Distributed free of charge by the thousand, the volume did not create in a single instance any special excite-

ment, nor anywhere the least open act of violence. A hundred years ago its inflammatory taunts, hurled broadcast over the land, would have made the streets of the Ghetto flow with blood and set firebrands loose over the domain. Now they failed entirely to have any effect. It bore, however, one strong result. Among the Jews themselves it created a spirit of caution and watchfulness that manifested itself in various ways. Like a burned child which fears the fire, they set to work in various places and by several means tried to avert danger. Unfortunately for them, there was now not a single prominent strong leader among the rabbins. So they had recourse to the large number of eminent physicians of the race, who in many instances were employed in their profession by kings, princes and nobles; and being generally highly esteemed by most patrons and profoundly learned withal, effective efforts were made in this direction to deprive Pfefferkorn's efforts of any lasting impression. In this the Hebrews were largely assisted by fair-minded and generous Christians. These had very little use for the resurrection of old hatred and the prejudices of a baptized renegade. It was publicly declared in many places that the thief Pfefferkorn was a worthless subject, undeserving belief. So it became manifest that it required another and more effective policy to get legal possession of the Talmud. This might be quickly achieved if the reigning and easily impressed German Emperor Maximilian could be won over to such purpose. In this direction, then, were turned immediately all our now forthcoming efforts. Our protege, with the superabundance of enthusiasm evinced by most new converts, a heaven-towering audacity, furnished with plenty of funds and provided with letters of introduction from high-standing parties and credentials of the most superior order, went

forth on the errand of seeking an audience with His Imperial Majesty, now in camp before Padua, at war with the Italian provinces. Pfefferkorn had full instructions how to proceed preliminary to the main issue, and he left his dear wife behind, to the great gratification of her many tonsured admirers.

Section IV.—The Abbess of Clarissa.

A powerful ally was needed to act upon the busy Emperor. Engaged in a long and serious war against the Venetians, his attention could not be directed to a book affair, and that a Hebrew book, except through the potent intercession of some great influence. The only available person for such purpose was his sister Kunigunde, the Abbess of Clarissa, to whom he was fondly attached.

This princess had a very strange career. In the days of her budding girlhood she had been beautiful and bright, but also extravagantly romantic and wayward. Kings and princes came to pay her court and sue for her hand and heart. The idol of her father, the Emperor Frederick III., who lavished the tenderest paternal love and his boundless wealth upon her, she nearly broke his heart by concluding a clandestine marriage with his arch-enemy, the Bavarian Grand Duke Albert of Munich. An intense rivalry existed between these two monarchs. The important city of Regensburg had lately been acquired by the crafty Wittleberg, and now he received with the hand of the princess, as her dowry, the not inconsiderable territory of Tyrol and a big slice of Upper Austria. The Emperor was so wroth over the perfidious treachery, that he immediately declared war against his hated son-in-law, and marched a large army to the boundaries of the Bavarian domain. By the most prudent, wise and persistent intercession of

the Crown Prince Maximilian peace was restored, and even a reconciliation between the angry parties effected. But the cruel, filial wrong preyed so on the father's heart that he soon sickened and died. Nor did Albert enjoy his triumph long. An insidious malady sapped his robust health, and after a lingering and painful illness, death at last came to his relief. This double bereavement affected the young widow to such an extent that she became melancholy and intensely religious. Remorse and grief soon caused her to abjure the ways of the world, and she took the veil as a nun in the Franciscan cloister. As a high and influential personage, and by her devotion and zeal, she was soon elevated to the position of Abbess of the Clarissans, the most important of all the many branches of the sister order. In this capacity she became a zealous devotee, fanatically laboring toward extending the scope and power of the Catholic religion. This bigoted woman was selected as the fittest instrument to advance the cause of Pfefferkorn. By our letters of recommendation he readily gained admittance to her presence. It was to her a singular spectacle: a former Jew came to revile his race. But it gained for his statements all the more credence. This was the cunning device of the Dominicans in their shrewd calculations when sending forth the convert. He now painted to her in glowing language how Christ, the Virgin, the Apostles, Saints and the whole Church were secretly despised and hated by the blasphemous tribe, and that they were encouraged in and taught such disgraceful acts by the pestiferous contents of their rabbinical books. These, he loudly declared, ought to be utterly annihilated as a shame and discredit to the holy faith, and the sooner the last copy thereof was confiscated and burned, the better for the faithful. He had no difficulty in stirring up the sensitive feelings of this

easily impressed devotee, and she furnished him without delay a strong letter by her own hand addressed to her imperial brother. In this she pitifully implored him to make an end, by his sovereign authority, of the sacrilegious calumniations of the Israelites, and command the burning forthwith of the Talmud and Prayer books. Otherwise, she pointedly added, the sins of the heretics committed daily in his realm would fall upon his august head. Fortified with this powerful missive, the truculent apostate departed, and reached in safety, after several days, the camp of the Emperor.

Section V.—In Camp.

Everything was hurry and bustle among the soldiers. Several battles had recently been fought. Another was preparing. The busy, anxious arrangements for the coming fray were in full progress. The hardest worker in the army was the Emperor, who in person superintended the auspicious task in hand, mapped out the plans, directed the movements, and kept posted concerning every detail appertaining to the affairs of the campaign. At headquarters, the Emperor was surrounded by the gaudily attired members of his staff, many of whom were aged men, much battle-scarred, and wearing plentifully the decorations and insignia of bravery and merit upon their uniform. They all stood bare-headed and in respectful but dignified attitude before their master. His majesty sat behind a long table littered with maps, books and papers. He was dressed in the uniform of the Honvets, his favorite regiment, the well-becoming "tchacko" on his head, a single large golden cross upon his breast. He argued, what seemed an important point, with several of his generals. A liveried footman entered

and announced the arrival of a special courier from his august sister. Pfefferkorn was ushered in, and with an obsequious bow handed the autograph letter of the Abbess to the Emperor. He threw a sharp side-glance at the unexpected visitor. The Kaiser's face showed that he was not too favorably impressed with the appearance of his new guest. He then broke the seal and read the missive. Mumbling something between his lips about trifles to bother him at such an important moment, he beckoned to one of the secretaries and instructed him to make out a mandate in compliance with his sister's request. A wave of the hand dismissed that functionary and the convert. These two retired together. Before evening the imperial rescript, duly signed and sealed, was in Pfefferkorn's pocket. Maximilian did not even read the document, but quickly scrawled his name thereto and ordered it to be sealed. He was sure his affectionately loved and pious sister would not ask anything unfair and unreasonable. The document read:—"By the grace of God:—We, Emperor Maximilian, hereby authorize our well-beloved subject, Johannes Pfefferkorn, to investigate throughout our whole German realm and its dependencies all Hebrew writings, and destroy such as are directed against our faith, the Holy Catholic Church. It is recommended that, in every instance, the resident vicar and the municipal authorities shall be present at such investigations. To our body-vassals (Kammer-knechte) the Jews, we command them not to resist our servant Pfefferkorn, but to bring before him all such writings as come under the head of this mandate, and to furnish him with all copies he shall demand. Signed, Maximilian I., Rex."

With this autocratic instrument in his pocket, the jubilant renegade returned to Germany. He was now constituted fully the master over all Hebrew

literature, arbitrarily and at will to condemn and burn whatever he saw fit of that literature in books and manuscripts. It was now no longer a war of killing bodies, but of the spirit and the fondly cherished intelligence of a people, the means by which they had outlived fire and sword, persecution and expatriation, and alas! all this in the hands of so unscrupulous and mercenary a wight as this M'shomet. If ever the cause of Israel seemed lost, it appeared now to have come about. Thousands might die as martyrs and the loss of their lives be compensated in the glory of their deaths; treasures and worldly possessions might be taken from them and they themselves made fugitives and outcasts; they yet could survive by the inexterminable strength and indestructible power of their inspired literature. But now this was to be taken from them also. Well might they cry out in their deep despair, "I lift my eyes to the heights, unto the Lord, whence shall come my salvation."

Section VI.—The First Effort.

The homeward journey of the newly created imperial commissioner led directly through the ancient free city of Frankfort-on-the-Main. Here was one of the oldest, best organized, wealthy and most influential congregations of Jews in the world. A successful blow struck at them would be a signal triumph for the work in hand. Many celebrated Talmudists taught here the contents of the Mishna and G'marah, these two chief parts of the rabbinical literature. Often they would dispute among themselves over important, difficult or doubtful passages. These arguments they called a Pilpul. Hair-splitting, sharpness of casuistry, fine display of logic and rhetoric and fine legal knowledge were displayed in

these mental tournaments. Such a place, set aside especially and often maintained by the pious charity of individuals, was called Beth Hamidrash, sometimes, too, a Klaus. There were very few houses in which a copy of the Old Testament or a complete Talmud might not be found. The veriest peddler, who groaned all day under the burden of his heavy pack, when returning tired out in the evening from daily labors, would, notwithstanding, never retire before occupying himself for some time with the study of the Law. In the fall of the year 1509 A. D., on the evening of Friday, September 28th, when the joyful feast of Booths commenced, an immense concourse of worshippers were congregated in the old Shuhl (synagogue). The cantor, a widely celebrated singer, was just about to chant the opening song of the Sabbath (lxxxviii.), "Come, let us sing unto the Lord, let us shout to the rock of our salvation." At that moment the central portal of the edifice was violently thrown open by a gruff-looking halberdier in his official uniform. He pounded with his weapon rudely on the floor and cried out in commanding tones, "In the name of the Emperor!" Now Pfefferkorn, attired in a self-assumed garb of a high governmental dignitary, accompanied by two well-known city councillors and three priests, entered the temple and advanced as far as the *bihma*, enjoying to its full extent the consternation and dismay pictured upon the scared and surprised worshippers. He then commanded, by behest of his majesty, that every one present bring forth their prayer-books and deposit them at the foot of the holy shrine. This done under a great deal of commotion, he next enjoined them that they must bring at early morning to the city hall all their Hebrew books of whatsoever description, the parchment scrolls of the Law alone excepted; he ad-

monished them that concealment or withholding a single copy would be visited with severe punishment. He lastly, with a cunning sneer, peremptorily forbade them the observance of the now ushered-in feast. Against this last wicked and frivolous tyranny the Catholic clergymen present violently protested. They prevailed upon the would-be commissioner to postpone the delivery of the books till the next Monday and to permit them the celebration of their holidays. Then the intruders departed. But the Jews took courage. Immediately after service, during which many tears flowed in invocation to the God of their fathers for help in this hour of need, they convened in general meeting. Brave words were spoken. They would no longer permit themselves to be unresistingly, as heretofore, plundered, robbed or slain like patient lambs led to the shambles. A committee, consisting of the venerable Rabbi, the Presidents (Parnassim), and five of the most influential and widely-known members, were appointed to appear on the next day before the Mayor and City Council to protest against the wanton insults offered in the house of worship, to demand recognition of their rights, granted them under seal by Emperors and Popes, securing free exercise of their religion, which included, as they claimed, the secure possession of their books. They should insist upon postponement at least of any arbitrary act against them, granting sufficient time for an appeal by special deputies to the Emperor and the German Federal Conclave (Bundesrath). That same night a mounted courier was riding at breakneck speed on the road from Frankfort to Mentz. He had been despatched by the Catholic clergy to their newly-elected archbishop, His Eminence Uriel von Gemmingen. The messenger bore documents relating in full the violent proceedings in the synagogue and

requesting orders from the superior what position the Church should take in these extra-judicial transactions. A full meeting of the city authorities could not be held till next Monday. Then the committee of the Hebrews were permitted to appear before them. The Rabbi was their spokesman. It is a pity that history has not preserved the name of that worthy. He pleaded so pathetically, urged so forcibly, and remonstrated so eloquently, that the Council would have unanimously decided in his favor, but Pfefferkorn threw the mandate of the Emperor before them and demanded obedience to the writ and execution of its behest. There was no alternative left, they must command the confiscation of the books. At that moment the three clergymen and their dust-begrimed courier entered. The archbishop, under his hand and seal, had ordered a stay of proceedings, and summoned Pfefferkorn with the official document to his presence. The oppressive measure for the time was foiled. The Council was glad to have the disagreeable business taken off their hands. Not one of them was in favor of waging war against books or recommencing distasteful hostilities against a race whose industry and honorable conduct greatly enhanced the prosperity of the loved city. To their credit, it is recorded, they went further. One of their number was commissioned to accompany the Jewish delegation to Padua, and aid, by petition and remonstrance, the immediate revocation of that obnoxious edict.

Pfefferkorn dared not ignore the hierarchical summons. He started next day on his journey to Mentz.

Section VII.—Before the Archbishop.

A new policy had been inaugurated at the See of the high episcopacy of Mentz since the death of the

old bishop and the entrance to office of his successor, Uriel von Gemmingen. By special decree from the Vatican, his dignity had been raised to an archbishopric, with a largely extended diocese. The incumbent was a favorite and friend of the Pope, to whom he had endeared himself by kindness of heart, loftiness of views concerning the high ministerial profession, and profound knowledge, not only in theological lore, but also the classic languages and belles-lettres. There was no room in the mind and feelings in such a humane character for any gross prejudice or persecuting intolerance, who, in the scope of his ministration, was both father and priest. The people, especially the women and children, idolized the strong, fine, apostolic-looking, good-natured man whose many kind deeds, unbounded charity and ready helpfulness on all occasions were in the mouth of everybody. It was a pathetic sight to find the little toddlers run up to him when passing through the streets, and, after reverently making the sign of the cross, kiss his hands affectionately. He soon knew them all by name, and had a kind or jovial word as he laid his fingers benignantly on one or the other's head. Among these children there were frequently, also, some of the black-haired, dark-eyed Hebrews, who were treated with the same impartial affection as the rest, although none of them would cross themselves on their approach. There was especially one boy, Isaac, the son of a poor widow, in whom the bishop had taken a deep interest. Repeatedly he was heard to say that the ideal image of the child Jesus came to his mind when looking upon that little fellow. Once, indeed, he had visited the mother and offered to adopt Isaac and have him educated if she would permit him to be baptized. But against this the woman protested with tears. "Our religion," she said, "is all that is left us, and

your Eminence is too good and generous to take the last we own." "Well, well," he responded, "I did not mean to hurt your feelings; we will see by-and-bye what can be done for little Isaac." The very next day after this occurrence, the message from Frankfort was brought to him at early morning. Its contents were a shock to his sensibilities. This man loved learning; a book to him was almost like a human being. He had studied a little Hebrew, and what he knew of it made him revere that language. Was it not the words and accents in which his dear Saviour had conversed and preached that eloquent, immortal Sermon on the Mount? And here came a villanous interloper who had possessed himself of a decree by a thoughtless Emperor to burn a literature which his friend and teacher Obadja Sforno had assured him was a treasure-store of thought and intelligence, which the Christians, whenever able to understand it, would prize as highly as the Jews. Such uncouth vandalism went entirely against the grain of his disposition. And then the studied insult to a people while engaged in worshipping God! His innate, true piety revolted against the barbarous attempt. He felt keenly, too, the slight implied at least to his official dignity for the Emperor to arbitrarily interfere with the ecclesiastical affairs of the diocese, never heretofore exercised except by the Church. So it did not take him long to issue his peremptory decree of stay of proceedings, demanding the presence of the imperial mandate and its bearer. When Pfefferkorn at last arrived, his unprepossessing appearance and coarse nasal jargon, none of which the holy water of baptism had been able to wash away, impressed the genial prelate very unfavorably. On examining the official document, it was seen at the first glance that it had been issued fatally defective, bearing neither the name of

the place where, nor a date when, promulgated. This was pointed out to the crestfallen renegade; he was told that such illegalities would give to the persecuted subjects good cause for resistance. These important omissions must be remedied before any further action dared to be attempted. Pfefferkorn agreed to return to Padua to have these errors corrected. The archbishop would, however, agree to no active participation in the matter, except on stipulation that the Emperor should appoint three learned, truthful, conscientious and impartial commissioners, to whom should be entrusted the task, as experts, to investigate and search all Hebrew books and writings suspected as irreverent, blasphemous or dangerous to the Christian religion, and nothing should be done until the official opinion of these commissioners was in possession of the emperor. The proposition was so reasonable, equitable, and advanced with such a persistent tone of high authority, that it was fully accepted. The members of that commission were then agreed upon. The archbishop nominated his renowned and learned friend, the Professor Johannes Reuchlin, a great theological and linguistic scholar of European reputation. Pfefferkorn nominated himself and Victor von Karben. These three were subsequently confirmed by the Emperor, who, however, added Hochstratten and Von Gemmingen as authorized commissioners, appointing also the Universities of Paris, Mentz, Erfurth and Heidelberg to participate in the Talmud investigation. These negotiations took nearly two weeks. A journey of Pfefferkorn's to Cologne for consultation with Hochstratten became necessary in order that all the proposed measures be sanctioned and approved. Meanwhile, the Emperor had found time, pressed by many high-standing personages, to give audience to the Frankfort deputation. It con-

sisted, in behalf of the Jews, of two powerful advocates, both well and favorably known to Maximilian, Jonathan Levy Zion and Jacob Triest. They were greatly aided by the imperial chamberlain, Goldecker. The easily swayed and readily convinced Emperor recognized that he had acted in too great haste. It was obvious that he was inclined to revoke the mandate. But Pfefferkorn appeared again with another letter from dear sister Kunigunde, more devoutly sanctimonious than even the first, conjuring her high and potent brother not to shame all Christianity any longer by the existence of such treasonable Hebrew books. The document, now rectified, remained in power. The Talmud must be confiscated. But it was further ordered that nothing should be done until the imperially appointed commissioners had rendered their verdict. The preservation or burning of the books hung henceforth in the scale balanced by the learned judges. His Eminence Von Gemmingen was authorized as commissioner to proceed with the confiscation and store the *corpus delicti* safely with the authorities in Frankfort. The distasteful task had to be executed, and within a week from the receipt of the rescript the bonded warehouses of the free city were filled with libraries of rabbinical writings. All eyes were now directed upon Professor Reuchlin, the acknowledged chief of the learned Junta, and anxious curiosity awaited patiently for his verdict.

Section VIII.—Johannes Reuchlin.

There are as many species of heroism in this world as there are avenues to display them. Unfortunately, military genius, with its brilliant and ostentatious achievements, so absorbs the admiring attention of mankind as to throw every other act of

distinguished merit in the shade. A thousand monuments of marble and bronze immortalize the bloody conquests of the sword, where one laurel-wreathed shaft commemorates a victory of the mind. And yet have the peaceful labors of the brain wrought greater and more lasting good for the race than all the conqueror's violent handiwork. It is the thoughtful student, burning the midnight oil, solving some intellectual problem, who has contributed more successfully to the true civilization of mankind than all the infantry, cavalry and artillery of the gory battlefields.

Such a hero we meet in his dingy study, poring over tomes of classic lore at a late hour when most of his fellow-citizens of Trier are wrapt in sleep. It is Professor Johannes Reuchlin, the lately-appointed commissioner for deciding a great and highly-important controversy, which fiercely agitates the whole thinking world. In all Christendom he was the only man supremely fitted for the ponderous task. Foremost, the irreproachable integrity of his character, sterling morality that valued truth above all worldly consideration, with a mild and tender disposition, and yet deeply sensitive to praise or blame. Such a man could be implicitly relied upon for impartiality and honest convictions. But what made him so superlatively fit for the work assigned consisted in the singular fact of being the only European Gentile scholar who possessed a profound knowledge of the Hebrew biblical and rabbinical language. True, he had acquired most of this late in life, but with the persistence of an enthusiast and the tenacity of a lover, he had never rested until the goal was attained. This, under the prevailing circumstances, was a herculean undertaking. There was not to be found among all his learned confreres even an elementary teacher. In the great libraries

there existed no works for his instruction. But the desire to learn the "Holy Word" burned in his soul. It became a passion. He had arrived already at the age of manhood. By this time his presence was required at the court of the aged Frederic III. at Linz in Austria. Here he found an eminent Hebraist, the imperial Jewish physician, Count Jacob Loans, and placed himself at the feet of this profoundly learned man, commencing at the age of thirty-five to con the "Aleph Beth." But the pupil was a born linguist. In Latin and Greek he rivalled the Italian savants, and excelled them, to the astonishment of his contemporaries, in eloquence of diction and versatility of expression. To the wonderment of his teacher, he mastered the difficult intricacies of the Semitic tongue in an astonishingly short time, and soon was able to read the Pentateuch and the rest of the Scriptures in their original versions, no less advancing rapidly to use and understand the exegetic commentators. A new light broke upon him. Never before had he been able to comprehend so completely the profound legal depth of the Mosaic legislation. Now there blazoned upon him, in the radiant light of a new and extended horizon, the eloquence of Isaiah, the incomparable poetry of the Psalms, the compact wisdom of the Proverbs, and the sublimity of Job. It was to him, he repeatedly stated, as if a blind man had been brought to light. Then he delved with the same eagerness into the rabbinical writings. Like an ambitious schoolboy, who by untiring efforts has solved some difficult lesson, entering the labyrinth of the Talmud, so trying even for the acute native mind, he walked through it as if it were a garden around the king's palace. When he came to the writings of Maimonides, the very existence of which he barely knew, his mind at first became like one dazed. Here was

a moral and ethical philosophy to which even that of his idolized Aristotle must stand in the shade. Every lesson to him was a rapture. At last he tried his hand at the mysteries and mysticism of the Cabalah. There, however, his clear mind strayed in the effort of forcing the confused and confusing norms and forms to Christology. Many precious hours, afterwards sorely regretted, he wasted in trying to find the *En Sof* (cause of causes) by a sophistic interpretation of the Hebrew name of Jesus (Joshua). But he soon got over these vagaries, and with renewed interest continued the absorbing labors of his love in their legitimate channels.

One other great influence was exerted casually by his connection with so excellent and exemplary a teacher. The meetings of these two spiritually related men took place generally in the house of Doctor Loans. It was unavoidable for the professor not to come in contact with the family, which consisted of a wife, a son, who studied with the father for the medical profession, and a young daughter, nearly twelve years old. The domestic life which he found here was another revelation to him. From earliest youth he had imbibed the dislike and prejudice prevalent against the Semites, especially among the higher class of citizens. Forgetting that the blood of Abraham, Moses and Christ flowed in the veins of these pariahs, whom a thousand years of most cruel hatred had deteriorated from noblest manhood and womanhood to what they were generally now, a class of hucksters and peddlers, subservient and apparently slavish and submissive, never aware that there was secretly stored away in their hearts a great share of that nobility which made them fit objects for divine intercommunion. Reuchlin had forgotten himself so far, in an unguarded moment, when already at the age of maturity, to publish a

sarcastic and bitter tirade against them. Later in life he was to sadly regret this. Now that he could make allowance for the physiological influences which centuries of unprecedented sufferings and woe must have exercised upon the status of these people, it became a marvel to him that they had not long ago succumbed altogether, socially, physically and spiritually. Is it a wonder that he was thrown from his poise altogether when coming in contact and intimate relation with a higher and better type of a nationality so much maligned and misrepresented? Here, in first instance, was Dr. Loans himself, who had climbed the ladder of the medical profession to its utmost height. He was trusted and relied upon implicitly concerning the health of the Emperor and family, the members of the court and princes and nobles, and consulted as an authority by his medical brethren. To be thus distinguished would have been enough honor for a man in his generation. But he was also a celebrated literati, who read and understood the Greek, Latin, Arabic and Sanscrit dialects. The German language he spoke and wrote fluently and eloquently, but, to cap the climax, he was acknowledged the greatest living Hebraist, to whom even the rabbis referred theological and ritual questions. With all this, he never lost sight of being a most considerate and loving husband, a tender and affectionate father. Strict in the fulfilment of his religious duties, he had become a leader in the congregation. The poor and needy worshipped him, and it had become a universal saying that he would rather attend at the bedside of a beggar than that of the princelings and barons. To all this must be added a behavior at once dignified, modest and unassuming.

Then there was the wife. A matron of advanced age when he first met her, time had but slightly

effaced her beauty, but given her in highest degree dignity and womanly graces. Refined, cultured and lovely, she was all in all to her husband and children; ever patient, ever forbearing, ever helpful and unselfish, the domain of her household was blessed with peace, congeniality and love, extending to a large circle of friends and embracing the entire community of the poor. The children were perfect types of their parents, the sunshine of the family and the pride and hope of father and mother.

The intimate friendly relations thus commenced here at Lintz continued for a lifetime, and it is on record that they remained mutually the source of greatest felicity and ever dear and cherished remembrances.

When the Dominicans accepted Reuchlin as the chief arbitrator in the absorbing issue which they had so cunningly evoked, they flattered themselves and were entirely confident that the whole subject was decided beforehand in their favor. Was he not their friend and coadjutor, a professor of Christian theology? Had he not in previous publications expressed his bitter attitude to their common adversary? Were not all worldly consideration for honor, emolument and advancement with the Emperor, his sister Kunigunde and the whole orthodox clergy on their side? Nor had his name ever been connected with the arrogant and impertinent Humanitarians. The powerful and wide-awake opponents who styled themselves "the Obscurants" (*Dunkelmänner*) might rightly claim the professor as their own. For the accomplishment of his work he had asked three months' time, and this was cheerfully granted him.

Section IX.—A Short Armistice.

The interim of ninety days, during which the experts were to work out their official opinions concerning the Talmud, was too important a time to be lost in waiting inactivity. Pfefferkorn sat down, and knowing that he would compromise his standing by ignorance were he to compete with Reuchlin, wrote, instead of an official opinion, two new pamphlets, grossly vituperative and violently assailing his former co-religionists. He had the greatest faith in the efficacy of his poisonous pen. The title of these literary efforts were, "The Little Easter-book" and "To the Praise and Honor of the Emperor." He engaged for himself and wife, as soon as the manuscripts could be printed, to distribute these pamphlets from house to house, and to read extracts therefrom in the public markets and places. And they were soon off on their errand, to the great regret of some of the younger monks, who did not like to be separated from the company of their dear and devout friend, Madame Bertha. Strange, I could never rise into any of her special favors. She would treat me with abject reverence, but keep me always at such distance that not even a familiar word was ever spoken between us. But there was a young dominie, rosy, foolish and flustering, who became so enamoured of her that public talk and scandal arose. This friar's name was Tetzal. It became necessary, in order to stop the damaging report, to send him away to some distance, and as I needed forthwith an emissary on some delicate yet important mission, and as he was otherwise bright, cunning and shrewd, I got him, at least for the time being, out of the way of the possible wrath of the husband, who pretended to be very jealous. I had watched that monk since my arrival here. The errand for which I selected

him was just fitted for the young rogue. Was it not possible to find among all the petty governments and principalities into which Germany was cut up, one of the reigning and powerful princes to use the arm of the Inquisition to venture, in case of great aggravation, to commit to the stake some of his Jewish subjects? I happened to pitch upon the proper party in the Elector of Brandenburg. He had just succeeded his father upon the throne, was very ambitious, quick-tempered, and blindly passionate when aroused to anger. Such a man would act violently if occasion stung him, and he was known to look with disdain and dislike upon his Semitic vassals. To his residence in Pomerania I sent Tetzal, with full instructions for working out my plan, and he did credit to his master. Very soon the report came that the holy vessels and golden utensils for the sacrament had been stolen from the cathedral of Berlin. The robber had been caught. My presence as Grand Inquisitor was requested to the scene of the sacrilegious theft. The burglar was promised immunity if he would reveal his confederates in the crime. He named several of the principal Jews, to whom he had sold the Holy Host, which they, as he averred, had pierced with needles in his presence. To his horror, as he stated, blood immediately spouted from the consecrated wafer. The terrible sight had so filled him with remorse of the awful crime that he could not eat or sleep till he, as he now did, made a full confession of the awful sin. All this was carried out exactly as planned beforehand. The Elector Joachim I. commanded me immediately to apply the torture and have the accused executed at the very scene of the crime. Thirty-eight Hebrews, for the first time that any of their race ever entered Berlin, on the 19th of July, 1510, mounted the pyres

erected before the cathedral and were burned. Above the rustle and the rattle of the flames could be heard the prayers and the songs of the expiring victims, keeping up their courage even unto the end. From the dais where I was seated I could notice the difference between the populace here and that of Spain. The Southern spectators, in fanatic sympathy with the proceedings, came in holiday attire, as if to a feast or a bull-fight. They screamed themselves hoarse with acclamations of joy and jubilation as the flames made their way upward and reached the doomed. Here the most appalling silence reigned at first. Then curses and maledictions became audible on every side. Women and strong men fainted as the fagots commenced to burn. It would have taken but a bold leader for revolution to have broken out instantly. The conviction came upon me firmly—*auto da fé's* would not do among these Teutons. The effect of this one, upon which I had counted so much, proved entirely contrary to my fond anticipations. Disappointed and chagrined, I returned with Tetzels to Cologne. Pfefferkorn had kept his engagements. He had proceeded with his wife and his books to Frankfort, had indiscriminately distributed the literature, read portions of it publicly in the beer and coffee houses and saloons. A thoughtless, unscrupulous priest had allowed him, the layman, contrary to the strict rules of the Church, to mount the pulpit and harangue the worshippers. Such unprecedented proceedings, however, disgusted the people more than it fired their hearts. Strong complaints were made to the archbishop. Rector Peter Meyer, who had allowed his church thus to be profaned, had to do penance for the offence, and a repetition of the same was interdicted on threat of excommunication.

Thus the auspicious ninety days were passed and at last were over.

Section X.—Signed, Sealed and Delivered.

It was now the 5th of October, 1510. On this day Professor Reuchlin had finished the task assigned to him by Emperor Maximilian. This consisted in answering the single ominous question, "Is it godly, praiseworthy and useful to Christianity to destroy by fire the Hebrew, especially the Talmudic, literature?" The elaborate answer was a heavy, voluminous document. It had been carefully enclosed in safe envelopes, sealed with official seal, addressed: "For His Majesty the Emperor, by hand of His Eminence the R. R. Archbishop Uriel von Gemmingen." Then he entrusted it to a special courier, who was placed under oath for its security and safe delivery. Thus it reached its destination and was deposited in the episcopal office with the other documents appertaining to this subject which had arrived also, to be perused at the earliest leisure of his Eminence. It remained still sealed. It was considered high treason for any one not authorized to break or even meddle with the sanctity of letter secrets. Pfefferkorn, who by appointment had arrived here to be present with his fellow-commissioners, was so feverishly eager to find out the opinion of Reuchlin, found ingress to the episcopal office and opened the package. He excused this afterwards with the belief that his official position under imperial authority gave him this right. He could barely trust his eyes as he read the contents of these papers. The opinions therein expressed were absolutely stunning. He thought it necessary to hastily make abstracts therefrom and forward them to his superior at Cologne.

Here was a clear and full vindication of the Talmud and the rabbinical writings. In highest terms of praise the Commentators were especially recom-

mended to the study of the Christian clergy. These learned books were pronounced the fountains of truth and righteous understanding. The philosophical and theological treasures contained in Hebrew literature were compared to the highest and best written in modern or ancient times, and the attempt of destroying such masterworks of almost inspired thought denounced as vandalism.

Nor did it stop with this. The position and treatment of the Israelites in his Majesty's realm were reviewed as right, justice and humanity had never dared to open their lips for a thousand years. They were boldly declared to be children of a common God—nay, German citizens, with all the rights, duties and claims for protection implied in this title. Finally the doings and brutal schemes of Pfefferkorn, Hochstratten and the entire order of the ambitious Dominicans were exposed as inhuman, unchristian, unpatriotic, and the strongest invectives launched against these as the real betrayers of Jesus.

A lightning stroke out of a clear sky could not have stunned the reader more than did these terrible, unexpected sentences. Had not at that moment the Archbishop entered the sanctum, it is more than likely the filcher of the secrets would, in his first passion, have torn the papers. The prelate, seeing the strange behavior of the intruder, and finding, to his astonishment, the seal of the parcel in his hands broken, took the document from him. Curiosity being thus aroused, his Eminence seated himself at his writing table to read the opinion from beginning to end. Pfefferkorn stood respectfully aside, but from the niche near the window, where he placed himself, watched like a tiger its prey, with eager gazing, to judge from the countenance of his superior what impression the sentiments of Reuchlin would make. Astonishment, delight, actual rapture became

visible on the reader's face as page after page was perused. Several times he broke out in loud acclamations, such as "The very sentiments from my soul!" "Bravely done, my good friend!" When the last line was read, the archbishop rose from his seat, removed the red skull-cap from his head, raised the ivory crucifix hanging from his girdle to his mouth, and then broke forth:—"Thanks to God that His name has been glorified by the great light of one of His faithful servants!"

Crestfallen and dumbfounded, the convert begged leave to retire. Permission for this was given until next morning, when his presence was required in this place. As he left, his Eminence followed him with a long look of detestation, and mumbled to himself, "I will keep him here long enough to foil any of his mischievous plans!" Then the divine became very busy. He wrote a long letter to the Emperor, commending in highest terms Reuchlin and the Opinion, endorsing every word thereof. Next he summoned a visitor, a young man who had arrived the evening before. He was a fine, stalwart, earnest-looking person, clad as a cavalier of those times. Von Gemmingen greeted him with a warm shake of the hand, and then said, "Friend Von Hutton, there is serious work for you! It is of the utmost importance that you ride for life, and after five days, at the outside, deliver this package to Maximilian's own hands. The sons of Belial, these Dominicans, will otherwise get the start of us, and mar what the divine genius of Reuchlin has done for the honor of humanity, the Church, and our German fatherland. Take it, be off, and farewell. God speed thy errand!"

Toward evening of the fifth day the package was handed to the Emperor. He read the letter from the archbishop, and this was so pressing, almost

peremptory, that a council of secretaries was called at once to make a digest of the lengthy writings and deliver the same before retiring for the night. It was rather late when the scribes returned, but his Majesty sat up patiently, and conversing with the messenger, became deeply interested in one of the most remarkable persons of those times, to whom he became attached henceforth with a never-ending friendship. Long after midnight the secretaries re-entered, and these too, having become enthusiastic in the work, delivered in glowing language the contents of the Opinion. The Emperor attentively heard them through, then he swore an oath that sleep should not visit his couch until this war against books was ended and his much-wronged subjects, the Jews, were righted. It was near daybreak when the imperial mandate for this purpose was in possession of Von Hutton.

Poor, brave fellow! Fatigued and exhausted as he must have been, at sunrise he was in the saddle, and never rested until he stood before the archbishop again, delivering the message of victory.

After a good night's rest, the two friends started for Frankfort. Immediately on their arrival there, the Mayor and City Council were summoned for an extra session, and the imperial mandate read to them. Within an hour the public criers hearded the message through the streets. The city's authorities, greatly relieved of an onerous task, had the books re-delivered to their rightful owners amidst great rejoicing of the whole town. That same evening the Jews *en masse* gathered in their place of worship, the "alte Schuhl," and celebrating a second Purim for their deliverance, sent prayers of praise and thanks to Heaven, asking fervently, devoutly and full of gratitude, blessings, prosperity and long life for their exalted friends, the Emperor, Reuchlin, the

Archbishop Von Hutton. All over Germany the Kaiser's decree was promulgated as quickly as copies could be forwarded, and the same scenes of worship and benediction enacted among the Israelites throughout the land.

[It is a stain upon the Hebrew people that they have not yet gratefully and generously erected a monument to their great benefactor, Reuchlin, who justly has deserved it at their hands.—THE EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.]

Section XI.—Aftermath.

It would be a great mistake to believe that I and my order, the Dominicans, took our so unexpected defeat passively or submissively. On the contrary, every nerve was strained to make it ineffective. From a comparatively trifling cause, it became now a gigantic struggle between the Orthodox Catholics and the Humanitarians. We, the former, had, according to all human calculations, the might, the power and the resources to overthrow at no distant period our momentarily successful adversaries.

Pfefferkorn was detained at Mentz on one pretence or the other for three days. He was virtually a prisoner in the cathedral, and would not have been released yet but for my personal appearance at the scene. Von Gemmingen told me openly that this man ought to be tried for heresy, having, as a layman and unconsecrated, preached from the altar, and that by right he should have been imprisoned for audaciously breaking the seal of letters not addressed to him. Claiming, however, that he belonged exclusively under my jurisdiction, he was set free. After a long consultation with him concerning the untoward event which had happened to our cause, he was off for Padua, where he arrived in great haste,

armed with another letter from sister Kunigunde. The missive was received, but the Emperor refused its bearer an audience, on the excuse of being too busy, and desired no longer any worry concerning matters which had been finally adjusted. When he returned to Cologne, the new mandate was already published and executed. What to do next became an enigma. The Universities came to our relief. Copies of Reuchlin's opinion were demanded from all, and they almost unanimously declared it anti-Catholic, heretical, and dangerous to the State. The King of France demanded, through his subservient High School at Paris, the public burning of the document and the immediate trial of the author before the Inquisition. Maximilian had a personal spite against his august brother, and peremptorily forbade any such proceedings. Both appealed to the Holy Father in Rome. But the Pope, Leo X., only lately elevated to the see, was a kind and liberal-minded vicar, prudently carried their quarrels upon both shoulders, not to spoil his standing with the two powerful majesties. He appointed a conclave of cardinals, handed over to them the whole matter, no doubt with the intimation that there was no special hurry about a decision. In the interim a war of words in pamphlets and books, full of crimination and recrimination, flooded the continent. Insults and vituperations were heaped upon Reuchlin and the Jews. The pens of Gratius, Von Karpen and Pfefferkorn were plied incessantly to stir up prejudices, enmities and revolts. But the Professor answered with a ponderous, crushing work called "Eye-Mirror." It was the defense of a wounded lion in his own lair, and every blow from his herculean power shattered an adversary. For the glaring liberalism expressed in this book, which actually roused Europe from pit to dome, I summoned Reuchlin, already

an aged man, to appear before the High Inquisition. I was convinced that I had the bold intermeddler by the hip, and to make our triumph all the more conspicuous, ordered him to Mentz. If we only could condemn the old reprobate, he should surely be burned to death upon the pyre. Some of the most potent princely personages protested against the proceedings, but all to no purpose. On the 12th of October, 1511, to our surprise, Reuchlin with two advocates appeared before the tribunal. The sham formalities of the court were gone through; evidence *pro* and *con* was heard; but the verdict of guilty was announced, and I had risen to pronounce sentence. At that instant Ulrich von Hutton, who had been, as accredited representative of the archbishop, a quiet spectator of the proceedings, rose in his seat, declared, in the name of his master, the verdict null and void, dissolved the ecclesiastical court, its power and functions, and took the accused by the arm, leaving the hall with him, to the consternation of every member there assembled. The crowd waiting anxiously outside, on learning the facts which had transpired, bodily lifted the two men on their shoulders and carried them in triumph through the streets. Violence against us was only prevented by an armed guard sent for our protection. I immediately returned disguised and in great haste to Cologne.

To still more complete our discomfiture, there appeared at this time a series of caricatures, no one knowing the authors. They came under the title of "Obscurant Letters." What reason and argument had not yet fully achieved, ridicule did. The whole continent laughed, having their risibles excited by the comic and humorous delineation of the funny situations and the compromised persons. The tone of these epistles was so serious and disguised that

at first we took them to be in our favor, and thus duped, took active and strong measures for their widest distribution. When our eyes were opened and we understood the reality of the thing, although chagrined and nearly bursting with anger, yet we could not help it—we laughed too, we had to laugh. To me, however, came the conviction that a new era had broken upon civilized mankind, and that if I was to continue in my mission of upholding thrones and altars against the rights and liberty of the people, more wily and effective measures would have to be set into action. So Hochstratten, foiled and thwarted, after a few more years of useless attempts concerning the issue pending, quietly disappeared from the scene. He was reported to have died suddenly, as stated by the malicious friars of Cologne, from poison administered at the hands of the still maligned Jews.

The record of these affairs would be incomplete were it not to relate what became of two of its principal actors. Poor Pfefferkorn! as if Nemesis were at his heels, he soon found his avocation as agitator against his own race gone. From the companion of princes and church dignitaries, he was leveled down to become a book-peddler, vainly trying to earn a living by disposing of his own writings to a world which had outgrown such truculent literature. At first, after entering the folds of the Church, his influential clerical friends had obtained for him from the burgomaster, as a reward for abjuring his creed, a lucrative position as overseer in the hospital and as salt inspector, but his frequent and long absences at last lost him the place. Financial affairs had never been too flourishing with him, and the ever-increasing extravagant habits of little Bertha helped greatly to deplete the exchequer. True, she received many gifts and often costly presents from her devoted

friends, but these consisted mostly of jewels and wearing apparel. What money came to her pockets she stingily shared not with her complaisant spouse, but hoarded in secret the larger part as a nest-egg for a rainy day. That much of Jewish saving prudence remained in her disposition, despite the new religious alliances. The budget record of Frankfort shows it in evidence that the magistrates voted two gold guilders to assist Pfefferkorn on his second expedition to Padua. The home life of these two ill-matched people became now hateful and embittered. The husband must have been fully aware of her unfaithful and unchaste conduct with the monks. As long as she appeared devoted to him and chucklingly boasted in confidence how she fooled these friars, all went on smoothly. Unfortunately, however, she had for the first time in her life actually fallen in love with the friar Tetzl. Everybody knew that she was infatuated with him and had become openly his mistress. And the passion was mutual. The priest became violently jealous of her, and in one of these fits of uncontrollable feeling made her swear upon the sacrament that she would as soon as possible divorce herself from her husband, with whose disposition and habits she was long since disgusted. Now, however, came the time that she had to accompany the old man on his huckstering expedition, being even required to carry some of the packages. Life became to her a heavier burden than all these. She pined for the man she loved, now far away. Determined to carry out the unholy vow, it led to frequent fierce quarrels and violent altercations. One evening, after a long day's tramp, they put up at a wayside inn. That night, after they had indulged to excess in intoxicating liquor, to which they both had become habituated, the convert, in drunken fury and blind in his rage, turned viciously

upon her and would have throttled the woman but that she was prepared for such an emergency. As he made a rush for his murderous design, she drew the dagger concealed in her bosom and stabbed him to the heart. When she realized the desperate deed, which would commit her to the executioner's axe, her reason became dethroned and she grew violently insane. All this happened during a dark and stormy night. Next morning the landlord found the murdered corpse, bleeding and stiff. It created a great commotion in the house. The people of a near-by village were horrified at the sight of a crazed woman running through their streets with wild shouts and flourishing a bloody dagger in her hand. When at last they caught the wretched creature, she had to be shackled hands and feet. After a quick judicial investigation, they immured her in a lunatic asylum, where she soon died in one of her frequently recurring paroxysms.

Thus ended another and one of the most strange and remarkable periods in the history of human civilization.

PHANTASMAGORIA XX.

THE REFORMATION.

Section I.—A Change of Base.

When the general of an army fails, after many brave but ineffectual efforts, to dislodge an enemy, by reason of disadvantageous position, he may think it advisable at heavy risks to move to a better vantage ground. This is called a change of base. Always involving great danger, if it succeeds it may lead to immediate victory. As in the conduct of armies, so

in the prosecuting of some great civil or religious plan, a movement of this kind may become necessary.

My experience during past centuries, attempting the subjugation of the people, had failed in most instances through the pusillanimous conduct of the very powers whom I sought to benefit. Generally by some bold stroke victory might have perched upon our banners, but the cowardly conduct of my allies and friends, who shrank from the final consummation of the object to be attained, made all previous efforts futile. True, such last crushing acts would have required the callous striking down of what maudlin sentimentalism called Humanity; but what should they have cared for the squirming, suffering, hungry and bleeding masses, provided they could have stridden conquerors forever over the heads and hearts belonging to the miserable slaves? Nor was it cowardice alone which foiled my ambitious mission. Petty jealousies among the rulers and priests, internal dissensions in their ranks, wasting disunion when fighting for an aim and object, played greater havoc in the achievement of the goal than either the strength, cause, or the desperate stubbornness of the other side.

Defeated along the whole line in every battle which I had thus far fought, should I give up the contest? Should I see hated Freedom, Right and Independence lift up the despised children of toil to the very pinnacle of happiness, prosperity, intelligence and culture? Should I see my proteges lay down crowns and abdicate mitres in fulfilment of the prophecy of the cursed Torah and Prophets, bringing in its direct wake the emancipation of Mosaism and its loathed confessors? Should all this come now in spite of my hellish agencies, Drink, Gunpowder, Inquisition, Blood Accusation and Intolerance, in spite the uncountable faithful co-

laborers in the spread and effect of either, despite the mountains of the slain and dead fallen at our hands during the long bloody struggles of the ages?

To abandon my malignity, to declare myself conquered by that monster called People, to sue for peace from Moses, Elijah and Christ! It is too horrible to contemplate! Once more, to arms! to arms! all ye legions of hell, all ye powers of darkness!

There is a great crisis at hand in the development of civilization. It boils, ferments and heaves amidst the spiritual life of the nations. Rome is the central point against which the storm-beaten waves of the coming revolution will dash with the whole hurricane of the age.

The papal power of a thousand years, built up with the cement of uncounted treasures, wasted lives of hosts, crushed intelligence and thought, must now stand the coming awful, fearful onslaught of rebellion. No eye so blind but to see in the near future this coming cataclysm, in which the long-chained consciences of men shall rise against their tyrants. The earth will be turned into a charnel-house, the continents into a blood-bath, Europe into a powder magazine. Upon the volcanic foundation the two giants, Fanaticism and Tolerance, will clinch in conflict for supremacy in life or death. Who will conquer?

I know it not! but I clearly comprehend what must be my position in the struggle. I am determined to try henceforth a change of base for my purposes. Playing the part of the Lion, I have failed to destroy my opponents. Let me try the role of the Fox, who in disguise of friend and ally will invade their own lines and from there lead them with guile and cunning to death and destruction. With my powerful, ever-present agents on one side, myself

intriguing on the other, it must go hard if we shall not crush the enemy between us.

Section II.—Johannes Tetzel.

Even the ever-busy Emperor had learned of the base, treacherous and lecherous part which the vile monk Tetzel had played with Bertha Pfefferkorn. In his great indignation he had commanded to drown the perfidious friar in the river Inn. But that worthy preferred a superfluity of wine to water, and prevented the roasting of the hare before the game was caught. His powerful friends, the Dominicans, interceded in his behalf and he escaped the death-bath. The audacious fellow is found next in some even more outrageous proceedings.

The Archbishop of Mentz, Von Gemmingen, had suddenly died. It is reported that his enemies at Cologne, raging over their defeat in the Reuchlin matter, had a hand in his untimely taking off. He was succeeded by the Elector Albert. Such an elevation to priestly honors involved the payment of twenty thousand gold guilders to the See of Rome. But Albert was poor. Where should he raise this enormous sum? In this emergency Tetzel offered his specious services. It would be folly to hold the Catholic Church responsible for the outrages of persons presumably acting as her agents.

A new method to press money from the pockets of the ignorant masses was introduced by that wily, scheming monk. It was known that Pope Leo X. needed funds sorely for the continuance of rebuilding the Cathedral of St. Peter at Rome. The works of Maestros Michael Angelo and Raphael in the golden dome, creating the immortal frescoes of the renowned church, had to go on. On pretense of aiding His Holiness in this emergency, a vast mar-

ket was opened upon earth by this friar. From the crowd of purchasers and the shouts and jokes of the sellers, it might be called a fair conducted by monks. The merchandise offered at "reduced prices" was the salvation of souls. The Elector injudiciously permits his diocese to be opened for this traffic on condition that he be released from his financial difficulties.

Tetzel was chief auctioneer for the disposal at public cry of the precious "letters of indulgence." Christendom was to be shaken from its very foundation by these unheard-of proceedings. He traversed the country in a handsome carriage accompanied by three horsemen, living in great state and spending money freely. When he approached a town, one of the riders, as deputy, waited on the magistrate and exclaimed: "The grace of God is at your gates!" Instantly everybody in the place was in commotion. The clergy, the priests and the nuns, the council, schoolmasters and pupils, the trades, with their banners; men, women, young and old, the sick and decrepit—all bearing lighted tapers, advancing to the sound of music; every bell tolling. They could not have received the Lord himself with greater honor. Salutations being exchanged, the procession moved towards the church. The pontiff's bull of grace was carried in front on a velvet cushion or on a cloth of gold. Tetzel came next, holding in his hand a large, red, wooden cross. Then followed the crowd singing, praying and incense in their wake. The sound of the organ and martial music welcomed all in the temple. The red wooden cross was raised in front of the altar; on it was suspended the arms of the Pope. As long as it remained there, daily before the salutation or after vespers, everybody rendered homage to the insignia. The quiet cities of Germany were in great excitement and commo-

tion, aroused by this strange religious spectacle. Tetzcl played the principal role in the performance. He was robed in the grand Dominican dress. His voice was sonorous and commanding, although it had in it already the tremor of prematurely advanced age. His salary was eighty florins a month and all expenses paid. A carriage and three horses were at his command. But his largest income was derived from the commission on his sales. He gained in one day at Freiburg two thousand florins. It would have been difficult to have found in all Germany a man better fitted for the business in which he was occupied. To the theological training as a monk and the zeal and spirit of an inquisitor he united the effrontery of a mountebank and the bravado of a political trickster. The circumstance which especially facilitated his task was his skill in inventing extraordinary stories, by which he captivated the mind of the people. As soon as the cross was erected he went into the pulpit, extolling the value of indulgences. The assemblage listened and stared as the boisterous eloquence flowed from his lips. Everybody was made to believe that they were assured of salvation and the deliverance of the soul from purgatory as soon as one had given the money. This is the refrain with which the voluble monk frequently interspersed his harangues :

“As in my box the money rings,
The soul from purgatory springs!”

Here is one of the delectable addresses delivered by the adroit frater, as a specimen of his cunning and ever-successful rhetoric :

“Indulgences are the most precious and noble gifts of the Lord. This cross (pointing to the red staff) has as much efficacy as the very crucifix of

the Saviour. Come and I will sell you letters, all properly sealed, by which even the sins which you intend to commit at some future day shall be pardoned. There is no crime so great that an indulgence may not remit. If any one had offered violence to the Virgin Mary, let him pay—only let him pay well—and all will be forgiven. Reflect! for every mortal sin you must, after confession and contrition, do penance for seven years, either in this life or in purgatory. Think how many mortal sins there are committed in a day, week, month, in a year or in a whole lifetime! Alas! these sins are almost infinite, and entail eternal penalty. And now by means of these letters of indulgence you can obtain plenary remission! Do you not know that if any one desires to visit Rome or any country where travelers incur danger, he sends his money to the bank, and for every hundred florins that he wishes to have, gives five or six or ten more, that by means of letters of this bank he may be safely repaid his money at Rome or elsewhere? And you, for a quarter of a florin, will not receive these letters of indulgence, by means of which you may introduce into Paradise, not a vile metal, but a divine and immortal soul, without its running any risk? But more than this:—Indulgences avail not only for the living, but also for the dead. For that, repentance is not even necessary! Priest! noble! merchant! wife! youth! maiden! do you not hear your parents, your friends who are in the tomb, cry from the bottom of the abyss: 'We are suffering horrible torments! a trifling alms would deliver us; you can give it—will you not?' O stupid brutish people, who do not understand the grace so richly offered! Heaven is everywhere open! Now you can ransom so many souls! Stiff-necked and thoughtless man, with twelve florins you can deliver your father from purgatory; and you are so

ungrateful not to save him! I shall be justified on the day of judgment, but you? you will be chastised so much more for having neglected a great salvation! I declare to you, though you should have but a single coat, you ought to strip it off and sell it in order to obtain the grace. The Lord our God no longer reigns. He has resigned all His power to His supervisors on earth. Do you know why our most holy Lord distributes so rich a grace? It is to restore the ruined church of St. Peter and St. Paul, so that it may not have its equal in the world. This church contains the saintly bodies of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and those of a multitude of martyrs. These saintly bodies, through the present state of the building, are now, alas! trodden upon, inundated, polluted, dishonored, reduced to rottenness by the rain and hail. Shall these sacred ashes remain longer in ruin and degradation? All cavilers and traitors who are opposed to this work are hereby declared excommunicated. Blessed are the eyes that see the things which you see, for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things and were not permitted to do so, and to hear those things which you hear and have not heard them! Therefore bring! bring! bring!”

Thus aroused to the height of expectation, the indulgence was now considered to have established its throne in the place with due solemnity. Confessionals decorated with sacred arms were ranged about. The under-commissionaries and father-confessors took their places. On each of their stalls were posted in large characters their names, surnames and respective titles. Then thronged the crowd around the confessors. Each came with a piece of money in his hand. Even those who lived on alms raised some such gift. The confession over—and this was soon done—the faithful hastened to the ven-

dor. Tetzal alone was charged with the sale. His booth was near the cross. All who approached him he examined with a scrutinizing eye. Their gait, dress, mien and bearing helped to decide what sums should be required of the individuals who presented themselves. A regular schedule for the traffic had been established. Kings, queens, princes, archbishops and bishops were, according to the scale, taxed twenty-five ducats for an ordinary indulgence. Abbots, counts and barons, ten. Other nobles, rectors, and every one with an income of five hundred florins, six ducats; and so on, all in graded proportions. For particular sins there were extra taxes. For sacrilege and perjury nine ducats, murder eight ducats, witchcraft two ducats, infanticide a half ducat, parricide or fratricide one ducat.

The letter of absolution read thus: "May our Lord Jesus Christ have pity on thee and absolve thee by the merits of His holy passion! And I, in virtue of the power that has been vested in me, absolve from all ecclesiastical censures, judgments and penalties which thou mayst have incurred; moreover, from all excesses, sins and crimes which thou mayst have committed, however great or enormous they may be, and from whatever cause, were they even reserved for our most Holy Father and for the Apostolic See. I blot out all the stains of inability and all marks of infamy that thou mayst have drawn upon thyself on this occasion. I remit the penalties that thou shouldst have endured in purgatory. I restore thee anew to participation in the sacraments of the Church. I incorporate thee afresh in the communion of saints, and re-establish thee in the purity and innocence which thou hadst at thy baptism. So that in the hour of death, the gate by which sinners enter the place of torments and punishment shall be closed against thee, and, on the contrary, the gate

leading to paradise of joy shall be open. And if thou shouldst not die for long years, this grace will remain unaltered until thy last hour shall arise. In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen!

Friar Tetzal, commissioner. has signed this with his own hand."

Will any impartial investigator maintain with a shadow of reason that the doings of this crafty, presumptuous monk were ever sanctioned or ever known to the see at Rome, just at this time occupied by one of the most liberal and generous Popes known to history? The excitement of the times, however, and fanatical partisanship afterwards charged the culpability of the individual on the body which he represented, or misrepresented. The pupil of Ben Beor proved worthy of his teacher!

Section III.—The Fiat Goes Forth.

On the morning of October 31, 1517, in one of the dormitories of the University at Wittenberg, two greatly excited men gave vent to their highly-aroused feelings, each one in his own peculiar way—the elder, a majestic-looking Augustine monk, Martin Luther, whose name on that day was not known outside of his small sphere. He was professor at this comparatively obscure seat of learning, and paced now violently up and down the narrow quarters, gesticulating fiercely, often shaking his massive head and speaking loudly to himself. His guest, Ulrich von Hutton, in a chevalier's dress and with a soldier-like appearance, sits at a table, resting his highly-flushed cheek on one hand, while in the other hand he holds a copy of Tetzal's plenary absolution. Presently he jumps from his seat, and with an immense blow of his mighty hand upon the table, he

vociferously exclaims: "This disgrace to the Church must no longer continue!" And, without saying another word, he rushes out of the room, his heavy sword clanging as he passes down the stairs and out into the street. "Right he is," says the other; "and when that brave fellow once undertakes to do a thing, he will make the ears of his foes ring. But I must not be idle while such shame and scandal go on right beneath my eyes, to disgrace all Christendom!" With these words, he proceeds to a side closet, takes therefrom a large scroll of paper, unrolls the sheets on the table, and seats himself to read what is written thereon. Then he continues to ply his pen, never resting until late into the night. The big clock in the high cathedral dome strikes twelve. The night-watchman has stopped right under the window of the writer, blowing his horn, and then singing in his gruff voice the usual refrain:

"List ye well! all folks be told,
'Tis twelve o'clock; now, young and old,
Take ye care of fire and of light,
That harm may not our city smite!"

When all was grown still again the monk looks for a hammer and some nails, and provided with these, takes the scroll of paper and proceeds to the doors of the cathedral. He rapidly nails the paper on the panel of the huge portals. Then he falls upon his knees, and more fervent and earnest prayer has never risen to heaven than he utters in that stilly darkness. Now he retires as quietly and quickly as he has come, and within a short time he is sound asleep on his hard and solitary couch. No one but God, the moon and the stars have seen the quiet act which was on to-morrow to shake and heave the civilized world in its very foundation.

At daybreak the citizens and yeomanry from miles

away turn their steps towards the great church. It is All Saints Day, a great and important festival of the Catholic religion. As they came, all seemed greatly excited, and they tell one another a curious story which has happened only on yesterday in the not far distant village of Interbogh. From the disjointed dialogues between the several parties, told amidst lively gesticulations, smiles and loud laughter, the following facts can be garnered :

While the sale of indulgences was going on at a lively rate in the large town church, a gentlemanly person with three stalwart followers approached demurely the reverend friar and requested to purchase an absolution document for a sin which he and his friends were under necessity of committing at some future time. After much haggling, twenty ducats were finally agreed upon as the price, paid over and the certificate properly signed and made out. The three companions of the purchaser then fell upon Tetzal, took away his heavily filled chest and disappeared, while their leader remained, and with drawn sword threatened any one with instant death who should follow or interfere with his confederates, explaining that this was the sin which they had intended to commit, for which they had paid the demanded price, and were in possession of the absolution. Being now arrested and brought before a magistrate, the sly fellow produced his papers, and, to the great discomfiture of his clerical prosecutors, was instantly discharged. The holy friar with his gang had thereupon disappeared, no one knew where ; nor did he ever again dare show his face before the people, most of whom had long since become disgusted and angered by the pretentious holy fraud.

But what means all the commotion, astonishment and swaying surprise amidst the wondering crowd

who throng the great staircase and the wide court leading to the portals of the cathedral? A cluster of priests and monks stand in front, perusing the paper which was fastened to the entrance of the sacred edifice. A universal shout comes from the densely packed mass of humanity: "Read—read—read!" One of the reverend fathers is lifted quickly upon the shoulders of two gigantic peasants, and he, with a stentorian voice, reads the proclamation: "Ninety theses against the folly of indulgences and the abuse of the papal power; by the priest and monk, Martin Luther!"

After the first few articles of this astounding protest are read, it is found that this will not do. The eager crowd cannot hear. The cry once more goes forth: "Copy them! copy them! we will patiently wait! but quickly copy them!" Ink, pen, paper, chairs and tables are brought. Twenty hands write incessantly to the dictation of one friar. Within an hour the transcriptions are made. The people divide in as many groups as there are copies to be read. When one party has heard them, newcomers take their places to listen. The readers, when exhausted, have to be changed. New copies are continually made. Prices for sheets of the theses were paid on that first day of November hitherto unknown in the annals of literature. Nobody thought of church or service on that auspicious morning. Next day the printers had done their work effectually and the ninety theses were rolled off from the presses by the thousands and scattered to all the points of the compass. They are now too well known to be reproduced here. Never had the minds and consciences of the Christian nations experienced such a stirring up. It was the bold gauntlet thrown right into the face of Rome. Within a month the document had found its way all over Germany, France,

Spain, Italy, to Holland, the Netherlands and Great Britain. The fiat had gone forth against the Catholic Church, and the name of Martin Luther was on the lips and in the hearts of millions.

Section IV.—The Lull before the Storm.

History at this period made immense strides. Her progress was like an avalanche, accelerated in furious force as it gained in momentum. All the passions which ever heated the thoughts and feelings of men were let loose. The coming revolution worked like a leaven, penetrating every stratum of society. Politics and theology became strangely mixed up. The shrewdest observer could not tell from one day to the other what new events and complications might be born.

Pope Leo X., a refined, scholarly and peace-loving gentleman, looked upon Luther's disaffection as a quarrel among rival monks; similar ones having worried him throughout his administration. He refused at first to interfere. The clamors came, however, so fiercely from high and low that he sent a special nuncio to investigate the whole affair, charging him to conciliate the contending factions.

The position of the Wittenberg Reformer is uncompromising, firm and unalterable. He will hear of no retraction, conciliation or change. Standing upon holy ground, the Bible exclusively, he is willing to be refuted by the sacred word, but no other authority shall move him from his purpose. The schism is at present engaged in tearing down the old barriers to clear the ground for the erection of a new structure. It has not come to creed-making yet. In his grave, preliminary work, the author of this new spiritual movement finds friends, sympathizers and hosts of co-laborers. Melanchthon,

the classic, amiable and true, becomes to him what Jonathan was to David. Zwingli, of Bern, is at his right hand. Erasmus, the great and popular sage, joins the forces. The Elector of Saxonia, the brave, strong Frederick, becomes his ally and protector. They all are agreed upon bringing down what they call this overbearing, hated power of Rome; the laying of the foundation of a new religious edifice which shall have for its strength and supremacy the eternal, adamantine basis of the Bible.

At this incipient stage and while thus deeply engrossed in the study of the law and the gospel, yet under the benignant, tolerant and personal influence of Reuchlin, it is curious to see how the sturdy, rough-edged and abrupt rebel-priest takes up humanely and even affectionately the cause of the Jews. His voice, now stronger and mightier than that of princes and potentates, cries out in their behalf, goes forth in their defense, recorded in his collected writings in the following strain:

“The rage against these Hebrews is yet defended by some trifling theologians, who advocate in their silly arrogance that these offspring of Abraham are the slaves of the Christians and the property of our rulers. Our preachers know of no higher ambition, especially in Passion (Easter) week, than to exaggerate the misdeeds of the old Israelites towards Christ; to embitter the hearts of the faithful against them. Our fools, the Papist bishops, sophists and monks, have until now so treated these Jews that any good Christian would rather have joined them than stay with us. If I were a Hebrew and had such knaves rule and teach the only saving faith, I would rather have turned into a pig than to a Christian. For they have treated these people as if they were dogs and not men. They are our blood-relations, kin and brothers of our Lord. When boasting of genealogy,

they stand nearer in flesh and blood to the Redeemer than we do. I pray all dear Papists, when ye grow tired to nickname me a heretic, commence to call me a Jew.

“Therefore it is my advice that we shall treat them tenderly. To use persecution and to malign them with lying accusations that they drink the Gentile’s blood for their sacred rites, and whatever else are these foolish imaginations; to forbid them to work amongst us, ostracize them and force the whole tribe to usury—this is not the way to make them come and join us. Whoever wishes to help them must extend to these people, not the Pope, but the law of Christian love; receive them friendly, so they may find cause and room to associate with us as neighbors!”

Thus spoke Luther at the start, when the Scriptures were yet his only standard. Later on we shall see him change his tune and become one of the fiercest and most malignant Anti-Semites. For this was the direct logical consequence when the Reformer, in making a new catechism, after having fought successfully the material Pope, endeavored to replace him with a new creed as a spiritual autocrat.

These considerations were, at this stage of the portentous events now ensuing, side-issues only. The aged Emperor Maximilian had died, and the young, ardent and enthusiastic grandson, Charles V., greatly aided by the help of the Elector Frederick of Saxony, became successor. He was crowned October 22, 1520.

During the turbulent state of affairs, His Holiness Leo, on June 15, 1520, had at last issued the famous bull declaring all the writings of Luther as heretical. But papal decrees had no longer their wonted force in the world, and condemnatory instruments were received everywhere, but especially in Germany,

with indifference and contumely. It was nothing strange, under the circumstances, that the menaced reformer opposed force to force. The Pope has put him under ban at Rome; he places the Pope under ban at Wittenberg. Hitherto the Pontiff's commands were all-powerful; now sentence will be pronounced against sentence. The people are constituted judges! On the 17th of November a notary and five witnesses met at ten o'clock A. M. in one of the halls of the Augustine convent. There the public officer, Sartor of Eisleben, draws up the protest against the papal "bull," and Luther's appeal to the future general Christian council against the authorities of Rome. The new Emperor is called upon to adhere to this protest in behalf of the defense of the new church. This is the bill of divorce of Luther from the Catholic creed.

On the 10th of December a placard was posted on the walls of the University of Wittenberg, inviting the professors and students to be present at nine o'clock in the morning at the eastern gate, near the holy cross. A great crowd of notables marched to the spot. Luther was at their head. A scaffold had been prepared. One of the old masters of arts set fire to it. As the flames rose high into the air, the formidable Augustine monk, wearing his cassock, approached the pile. He carried the canon laws, the "Decretals, the Clementines, the Papal Extravagants," some writings of his foes Eck and Emser, and the Pope's bull. All the other documents having been first consumed, Luther held up the bull and said, "Since thou hast vexed the Holy One of the Lord, may everlasting fire vex and consume thee!" He then flung it into the flames. Never before had war been declared with greater energy and firmer resolution.

The wheel of time continued to turn round, groan-

ing and crunching. In one of its next mighty sweeps a solemn diet is open in the city of Worms. It is now the 28th of January, 1521. At no time had so many princes met in sacred conclave. Each one was desirous of participating in the first official act of the then young Emperor, who was hardly twenty years of age. Electors, Dukes, Archbishops, Landgraves, Margraves, Counts, Bishops, Barons and Lords of the Empire, as well as deputies of the towns and the ambassadors of nations, throng with their brilliant trains the highways that lead to Worms. On this, the birthday of Charlemagne, the new Emperor in person opened the first session of the august conclave. There was much worldly and important business to be transacted, but the most momentous affair was the disruption of religion in Germany. Luther had been summoned through his friend, the Elector Frederick, to appear. The imperial pledge was given that no injustice should be shown to the Reformer, that no violence should be used against him, and that learned men should confer with him. It was a sacred safe-conduct for his coming and departure.

The Emperor was placed in a very great dilemma by the whole affair. What must he do, placed between the Papal Nuncio and the Elector, to whom he owed his crown? How can he avoid displeasing either Alexander or Frederick? The first entreated His Majesty to execute the Pope's bull; the second besought him to take no steps against the monk until he had been heard. It was a political melee, by which the Church swung to and fro in the balance of affairs.

In this strait an official "seneschal" was sent to Wittenberg, bearing the Diet's summons for Dr. Martin Luther's appearance at its bar, entrusted with safe-conduct in the Emperor's own handwriting. It read:

“Charles, by the grace of God Emperor-elect of the Romans, always august.

“Honorable, well beloved and pious!

“We and the States of the Holy Empire here assembled, having resolved to institute an inquiry touching the doctrine and the books that thou hast lately published, have issued for thy coming hither and return to a place of security, our safe-conduct, and that of the Empire, which we send thee herewith. Our sincere desire is that thou shouldst prepare immediately for this journey, in order that within the space of the twenty-one days, fixed by our safe-conduct, thou mayst without fail be present before us. Fear neither injustice nor violence. We will firmly abide by our aforesaid safe-conduct, and expect that thou wilt comply with our summons. In so doing thou wilt obey our earnest wishes.

“Given in our imperial city of Worms this sixth day of March, in the year of Our Lord 1521, and the second of our reign. CHARLES.

“By order of my Lord the Emperor, witness my hand and seal, Albert, Cardinal of Mentz, High Chancellor. NICOLAS ZIVIL.”

The letter was addressed “To the honorable our well-beloved and pious Dr. Martin Luther, of the Order of Augustine.”

Here was a great anomaly: a man whom the head of the Church had excommunicated, with all the fearful consequences which this hitherto implied; the Emperor conferred on him the title of “well-beloved, honorable and pious.” As herald commissioned to bear this message was one Gaspard Sturm, who delivered the same safely and was to escort the professor to Worms.

Depite the apprehensive warnings of friends who remembered the fate of John Huss under similar guarantees; in spite the well-known machinations of

enemies who tried everything to intimidate the Reformer and make him disobey the summons, but to stay away and flee for his life; on the second day of April he bade tearful farewell to the host of his intimate companions and started for Worms. The journey resembled a triumphal march. Everywhere the cortege was received with shouts of greeting and exultation. The monk under the ban was hailed as liberator, and treated in all places where he passed as a guest of the nation. At length on the morning of April 16, the walls of the ancient city of Worms came into view. Here a train of one hundred lords and knights met Luther, in his modest car, preceded by the herald Sturm, in gaudy trappings. A friend, Jonas, followed on horseback. The cavaliers rode on both sides. An immense crowd awaited the Wittenberg doctor at the gates. Here a messenger approached him. Spaladin, the chaplain of the Diet, a warm supporter of the new movement, apprehensive that the safe-conduct would not be respected as being given to a condemned heretic, sent the urgent advice: "Do not enter the city!" But Luther is undismayed. He turns his eyes, always full of fire, on the messenger, and undauntedly replies: "Go tell thy master: if there were even as many devils in Worms as there are tiles on the housetops, still will I enter it!"

Cited by the hereditary grand marshal of the empire, Ulrich von Pappenheim, on the seventeenth of April, at four in the afternoon, Luther is conducted to the famous town-hall. The crowd is so great that his conductors have to pass through the adjacent houses before they can reach the huge iron portals. Here an old battle-scarred general on guard taps the doctor on the shoulder and says to him: "Little monk! little monk! thou art now going to make a nobler stand than I or any other captain

have ever held in the bloodiest of our wars. But if thy cause be just and thou art sure of it, go forward in the name of the Lord of Hosts and fear nothing. God will not forsake thee!"

Now the doors of the hall are opened. Never had ordinary man appeared before so imposing an assembly. The Emperor Charles V., whose sovereignty extended over the greatest part of the world, on his golden throne; his brother, the Archduke Ferdinand, and six Electors of the Empire, all wearing kingly crowns, by his side. Just beneath them are seated twenty-four dukes, each an independent ruler over countries more or less extensive; eight margraves, thirty archbishops, bishops and abbots, seven ambassadors, including those of France and England; the deputies of the free cities; a great number of princes, counts and sovereign barons. Among the conspicuous papal nuncios stood foremost the Emperor's confessor, Alexander. In all there were two hundred and four persons. Such was the Diet now in session. The memorable proceedings, charges and investigations lasted for two days. The trial concluded with the immortal words of the unterrified Reformer: "Unless I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture or by the clearest reasoning; unless I am persuaded by means of the passages I have quoted from, and unless my conscience is bound by the word of God, *I cannot and will not retract. Here I stand, I cannot otherwise. May God help me! Amen!*"

The assembly was thunderstruck. Many of the princes found it difficult to conceal their admiration. The Emperor, recovering from his first impression, exclaimed: "This monk speaks with an intrepid heart and unshaken courage." Luther had withdrawn. Charles V. arose and all the assembly with him. "The Diet will meet again to-morrow to hear

the Emperor's judgment," said the chancellor, with a loud voice; "the meeting stands adjourned!"

On the next day, at the hotel called "The Knights of Rhodes," where Luther had taken residence, the imperial chancellors and a notary appeared and had the doctor brought before them. One of the chancellors said to him: "Martin Luther, his imperial majesty, the electors, princes and states of the empire, have at sundry times and in various forms exhorted thee to submission, but always in vain. Our sovereign, in his capacity of advocate and defender of the Catholic faith, finds himself compelled to resort to other measures. He therefore commands thee to return home in the space of twenty-one days and forbids thee to disturb the public peace on your road either by preaching or writing." This was tantamount to condemnation, although the edict of judgment was not issued, signed and sealed until the 8th of May.

Within a few hours the outlawed Augustine professor departed from the city which had seen his glory and the plaus for his soon-to-be-encompassed downfall. Great apprehension was felt by his friends that he would be waylaid and assassinated on his road homeward. Unknown to the fugitive, they watched over his safety. They knew that his opponents would shrink from nothing to annihilate the original agitator of the troubles. Luther himself thought his fate was now sealed. He would once more see his parents and the dearly loved old village of his nativity. The old peasant clasped in his arms that grandchild, as did his elated parents their now renowned son who had defied the Emperor and the Pope. One day was spent with relations, too happy, after the tumult at Worms, to enjoy here a short respite of tranquility. Next morning he continued his journey through the dense forests of

Thuringia. He was accompanied by a brother, James, and friend, Armsdorf. When they reached a secluded spot in the woods, five horsemen, masked and armed from head to foot, sprang upon the travelers. Three of these seized Luther, threw a military cloak over his shoulders and placed him upon a horse. All was done without a word being spoken. The driver, brother James and Armsdorf fled, chased away by the two other masked men. Then the five remounted and in the twinkling of an eye vanished with their prisoner into the gloomy forest. At dark the Reformer was safe in the castle of the Wartburg, a prisoner with his friend and protector, the Elector Frederick. The monk was made to lay off his friar's garb and dress himself in military uniform. His name for the time being was changed into Count George. No one in the castle or surroundings except the initiated knew or apprehended who this stranger really was. In the solitude of this ancient keep, midst the giant trees of the forest and the walls of beautiful gardens, the translation of the Bible into the language of his fatherland, the real great work of his life which will endure forever, was accomplished. Often he had spells of misgivings and hallucinations. Once he even fancied that he saw the devil rising from the ground to take possession of his soul. He threw the inkstand at the wall; the blots there remain even unto this day.

All the intelligent world was in an uproar of commotion. No one knew what had become of the celebrated reformer. His enemies were delighted, but the host of admirers, friends and adherents were struck with amazement, indignation and horror. A cry of grief resounded through all Germany: "Luther has fallen into the hands of our enemies!" They should soon learn otherwise.

Section V.—The Rebel, Thomas Munzer.

During all these troublesome and exciting times what had become of Ben Beor, the wandering Gentle? Aware that the crisis of the dismemberment of the Church had come, and that no power on earth could stay the revolution, I stood aside to wait and watch the upheaval of such fiercely aroused religious elements. There surely must come a time and place where cunning and craft might put in its counteracting work, and by this scheme, if possible, once again support and perpetuate the supreme powers of State and Church. The turbulent masses themselves, under the guidance of a wily leader, must help to bring about the destructive downfall of the whole cursed movement. My new policy had commenced. It is what the sportsman calls a still-hunt.

The sufferings of the peasants, especially in Thuringia and the provinces of the Upper Danube, are beyond all description. The land here is poor, and repeated droughts had brought the tillers of the soil to the verge of starvation. The miserable huts in which they lived fell into decay; the women and children were in rags, and want stalked over the land. To this was added the misfortune that the men were given to dissipation, spending their time and what little means they could scrape together in the taverns. These places were low, smoky and often filthy, and here on rude benches the swilling farmers passed away their time till deep into the night. The stuff which they drank went by the general name of "Fusel," and was the crudest, most fiery and poisonous alcohol which could be distilled. Under its influence the men became boisterously talkative, and in this were given much to discoursing politics and religion. The inexorable tax-gath-

erer came in greatly as the subject for their bitterest denunciations. Every distraintage and every eviction executed by that omnipresent official was the cause of inciting the inflamed minds to frequent outbreaks, ending in bloodshed and murder.

To this simple-minded population had come a confused report how one of their good priests, Father Martin Luther, of Wittenberg, had bidden defiance to the Pope and the Emperor. To them it meant nothing else but "no more tithes and no more collectors! more drink and less work." Among such people in the small village of Altstadt there had settled a priest, a very peculiar man, by the name of Thomas Munzer. He appeared to be well-informed of Luther's reformation movement, and on pretense of deeply sympathizing with the distressed yeomanry, drew dense crowds to hear his rough, plain eloquence, just such as would be understood by his unsophisticated audiences. He attained a controlling power over them; his reputation soon extended to a great distance. The Church reform was to him no reform at all. The deliverance of the people from hunger, oppression and tyrants was the watchword with which he set his deeply-aggravated hearers crazy. Every one of these acted like a missionary in the spreading tumult. A conspiracy of wide extent was soon inaugurated, which became all the more dangerous as it acted by a new device of Munzer's own invention and direction. Secret societies were established, whose ever-increasing members pledged themselves under the penalty of death not to reveal the work, doings and principles of the initiated. The outside world little dreamt of the existence of the powerful plot when already thousands had joined its ranks. The new herald of freedom in his public utterances openly declared that he and his followers did not care about this fight with the Pope; that

those arrogant reformers, as soon as they had ousted Rome, would institute an equally despotic hierarchy of their own. It was immaterial to the suffering slave whether mass was said in church or no; whether a priest might marry or stay in celibacy. It is always the Bible, ever the Bible, with which they would feed the starving—giving them, in the very words of that book, a stone instead of bread. The only cure for all existing evils is community of property and the principle of free-love affinity in the domestic relations of mankind. Ensnaring and enticing as such firebrands of words proved among the benighted, ignorant and easily excited masses, something dreadful happened right in the centre of this sleeping crater which stirred up the approaching calamity to earthquake violence:

A number of years ago a middle-aged man with an only daughter and two sons had come to reside in the village. Lately bereaved, a gloom of deep mourning was cast over the family, which the loss of a good wife and fondly loved mother makes visible in many ways. The father bought a tract of land amidst the farming dwellers, and erected thereon a comfortable house, something unusual for this district. The lower portion was arranged for dealing in merchandise, and to the great accommodation of his neighbors they could now purchase their goods at home. The newcomers endeared themselves greatly to the neighbors by friendly intercourse and an ever-ready hand and heart for charitable and benevolent help wherever distress called for such, and this, alas! was too often the case. Mirjam, the daughter, was the soul of the house. Although not more than fourteen years old, the little woman took charge of the entire domestic care, including the management of her two younger brothers. She was bright, quick, and prematurely developed in body and mind.

The boys, not more than thirteen and eleven years old respectively, loved her fondly and obeyed her as if this was self-understood, she having a natural tact which assured ready obedience without command. Several times the family had been visited by wealthy relatives. These, as everybody in the neighborhood knew, made efforts to induce Moser, the merchant, to sell out and return to the city; but he would not listen to such well-meant proposals. He, as was his ever-ready answer, enjoyed a happiness among the ruralists, contentment and health, to which during a long previous career the family had been strangers. So the girl grew into a young lady, and Morris and Joseph, the boys, into strong and sturdy lads who delighted in farm work and gardening, of which they made a great success. Everything flourished and prospered in this simple mode of life. It was remarked that they never went to church. Before the arrival of Munzer the old genial pastor had called several times at the house, where he was cordially received. When he left the last time he was satisfied with the reasons why these people stayed away from mass and communion. "Children," he was heard to say to his inquisitive parishioners, "they do not believe as we do, but they fear God and are so kind and good that it matters not." By-and-bye it was learned they were Jews; but nobody cared. And when the people saw repeatedly their own reverend pastor sit with the merchant, both poring over books in friendly dispute, it increased respect and attachment for the family all the more. Lately it had been whispered about that their own dear Mirjam would soon have to leave them, as she was shortly to be married. While everybody rejoiced at her good fortune, they sincerely regretted losing the little mother, as all were wont to call her. She would be replaced by an aunt, an old

maiden sister of her lamented mother, who had already arrived and helped in the busy arrangements and preparations for the wedding.

A few miles away there stood upon one of the lofty crags of the "Wald," the ancient castle of "Eagle's Nest." Its old baron and only son were rough, boisterous and profligate nobles, such as a short period ago were the terror and plague of the country. Among the robber knights and chivalry none were more feared and dreaded than the Von Schwarzbeargs, who held their revel and committed their crimes here on their possessions. The strong hand of the Empire had forced these lawless marauders into some decent behavior. The old man Wilhelm and his young scion George never had passed through the pauper village of Altstadt, and barely knew its existence. But it happened that one day while on a boar chase they and a lot of kindred companions were led this way by a wounded animal. They charged on their foaming horses through the town, making the usual stillness a pandemonium of noise and uproar with their shouts. Everybody ran to the doors to see what was the cause of all this unearthly disturbance. Among the curious was Mirjam; she was unfortunately espied by the young Baron George, who gazed at the beautiful form like one entranced. At his bidding the whole wild crowd dismounted. They were already excited by the desperate chase and plentiful intoxicating potions imbibed from their well-filled drinking horns. They rushed pellmell first into the store, then into the private rooms of the house. Mirjam and her aunt had taken refuge in their sleeping apartment. The girl in her desperation had snatched up a dagger and hid it in her bosom. Moser ran to the protection and defense of his daughter. He was felled to the ground with blows from the guns, and lay bleeding and dying

before the door. The intruders kicked him aside and forced the doors open. The two lads had come running in from the garden, where they had been at work. They flourished their pitchforks, and seeing their father on the floor, they fought bravely and frantically, wounding several of the crowd; but they were soon knocked down, mortally wounded. Then the feeble women were dragged forth. The old aunt resisting all in her power, a savage blow on her head spattered her brains against the wall. The leader, young George, tried to clasp Mirjam in his arms, crying out: "Beauty belongs to the castle!" The girl, however, quickly drew her dagger from its hiding-place and, nerved by desperation and despair, plunged it into the breast of her assailant, piercing him through the heart. The would-be kidnapper fell dead at her feet. She was then soon overpowered. The old Baron, when he saw and realized the irreparable loss of the last of his house, was frantic. In his fearful rage he snatched the dagger from the breast of his son, and with his own hand thrust it into both the eyes of the shrieking woman, screeching out to his shuddering companions, "Let the wench go blind through the world to tell the vengeance of a Schwarzberg!" When his fearful deed was done the crowd took up the body of the Baron. In a few minutes all were gone and the place was silent. Half an hour had sufficed to transform the peaceful, happy paradise of a home into destruction and blackest hell.

Then the peasants, already ripe for insurrection, came and viewed the terrible scene, the desolation, anguish and death among those whom they had learned to revere and love. One cry of revenge broke forth from the exasperated crowd. After the burial of their favorites, and after taking care of poor Mirjam and the most scrupulous watch over

the estate, they armed themselves with spades, flails, pitchforks, axes and hammers. On the morning of the second day after the outrage, under leadership of Munzer, five thousand farmers climbed the heights leading to the castle of the "Eagle's Nest." Before night there was not left a living soul within its ramparts. They caught Baron Wilhelm and his friends lamenting and mourning over the corpse of the late noble George. One by one was hurled from the walls into the abyss on the east side of the keep. Then fire was set to the premises. Not one stone was left upon another. Blind Mirjam and her sacrificed family were well avenged!

The ball was now set in motion. "The Peasants' War" had commenced. Under the guidance of their fanatical leader and priest they became a semi-organized body, ready to perform any deed of violence and outrage at every opportunity. They were divided into several sections. Each had its own favorite banner. Inscriptions of "Liberty," "Equality," "No more tithes," "No more taxes," "No property," "All for All," graced in their severalties the woollen buntings. There was seen at their head a blind demented woman. It was Mirjam. As soon as sufficiently recovered physically, the priest Munzer had taken care of her. The maiden's mind, once so bright, lovely and loyal, was now idiotic. She turned like wax in the hands of the designing priest and he had her soon fired with a frenzy for the new religion. Her anxious affianced and relations were not permitted to see her. On threat of instant death they were warned away from approaching the village, cordoned by a band of rebellious farmers. Shortly she was baptized into the church and made a prophetess in the new rebel cause. Her overwrought brain turned now on pious hallucinations. She had supernatural visions

and divinely exalted dreams. God appeared to her in person. She was commanded to break down the idols and the images of the church. She was bidden to destroy the mass and its idolatrous ministrants. And as she said, so Munzer and the willing hosts obeyed; and as she commanded, so these now furious mobs would execute. From church to church, from village to village, from town to town the crazed rabble moved. Not a sacred picture was left, not an image remained. The altars were hewn down, crucifixes and sacred shrines burned and destroyed. But yesterday worshipped as divine, to-day they were defiled and profaned. The consecrated priests, who now eagerly joined these bands, were foremost in carrying out the senseless havoc. Many of them forsook their vows of celibacy and married. Munzer had proposed a spiritual connubial union with Mirjam. But against this she remained obdurate. Christ was her wedded spouse, and no mortal man should mar her celestial love.

The news of this ever-swelling outbreak in a short time reached Luther at Wartburg. He had just returned there after risking his life and safety, quelling dangerous dissension in the midst of his friends and followers at Wittenberg. And now, after giant efforts to restore union among the discontented and rebellious priests, professors and students, came the report from the threatening political uprising of the exasperated, greatly tormented peasants. Their cause was certainly to a large extent justifiable. But the question of the church reform, yet in its infantile weakness, was and must be, at least for the present, supreme. Both could not possibly succeed. One must be sacrificed. The disaffected farmers warred directly against the rights and privileges of his noble, aristocratic and powerful associates. If these should be armed against him, both causes would be unques-

tionably in instantaneous and certain peril. So his choice was taken and with firm determination. The revolution must be put down with force of arms and at whatever cost! He called for the Elector and such princes and magistrates whose sovereign territory was in danger of being overrun by the bold rebels. Before they could meet, new reports of shocking occurrences came in. Towns were sacked, cities set on fire, all bonds of law and order torn asunder. The extent of the rising grew with fearful velocity. Now or never this commotion must be quelled.

As soon as his noble patrons met, he urged with the rough eloquence and persuasive powers of which he was an incomparable master, the immediate necessity of taking the field and making a speedy end of the revolt. His language was overwrought and, even in the opinion of those who sided with him, he overstepped the just bounds within which one who professed the "gospel of love" should have contained himself. He said: "These peasants commit three horrible crimes against God and man, and deserve death of body and soul. First, they revolt against their magistrates, to whom they have sworn fidelity; next, they rob and plunder convents and castles; and lastly, they veil their sins with the cloak of the Gospel. If you do not put a mad dog to death, you will perish and all the country with you. For this reason, my dear lords, help, save, deliver! have pity on these poor people! Let every one strike, pierce and kill who is able! If ye die, ye cannot meet a happier death, for it is in the service of God and to save your neighbors from hell!"

The princes elected as their chief commander George von Truchsess. Within a short time the imperial army was in the field. They found brave and determined resistance; but how could an undisciplined, unorganized, ill-provisioned mob stand against the

regular army? It was pitchforks and rails against guns and powder. Munzer had tried by every possible effort to provide his wild cohorts with firearms. In this, however, he failed, although he had plenty of ammunition. Nor would the weapons have been of any practical service with his untrained people, who had a great prejudice against any other warfare than with their crude, heavy farming implements. As may be readily foreseen, in several bloody encounters the yeomanry were slaughtered by the thousands. Mirjam the prophetess was taken prisoner and instantly put to death. A soldier took a sick man from the loft of a house at Frankenhäusen. The invalid thinking that he would fare better by simulating to be Munzer, owned after pressing questions that he was the now renowned and notorious leader. He was beheaded without trial and delay. But the real Munzer, "the Wandering Gentle, Ben Beor," was far away, rejoicing in the success of his first trial of a most promising plan, and projecting new schemes for his direful, cruel mission against the people and their rights.

Section VI.—The Nuns of Nimptsch.

In the monastery of Nimptsch, near Grimona in Saxony, there dwelt in the year 1523 nine nuns. A stranger who pretended to be a colporteur of the new Reformation, left there one day a German translation of the Bible; and the young, pious sisters became diligent in reading the word of God. From this they discovered the contrast which existed between a domestic and a monastic life. Their names as entered in the cloister records were Magdalen Staupitz, Eliza Canitz, Ava Grossen, Ava and Margareth Schönfeldt, Laneta Golis, Margareth and Catharine Zeschau, and Catharine Bora. The first

impulse of these young women, when the new idea had taken root in their minds, was to write to their parents: "The salvation of our souls will not permit us to remain any longer in this convent." Their prayers were harshly rejected. The poor nuns were dismayed. What should they do? Their timidity was alarmed at so desperate a step as leaving the cloister by their own volition. At last the horror they now felt against the papal services prevailed, and they promised one another to keep together and repair in a body to some respectable place, orderly and with decency. Two worthy and pious citizens of Torgau, whom the nuns made their confidants, Leonard Koppe and Wolff Tomitzsch, offered assistance, which they accepted, believing that it came from God himself. On the seventh of April, 1523, a wagon stopped before the cloister and the nine nuns climbed in, amazed by their own boldness. Their two rescuers drove them directly to the gate of the old Augustine convent at Wittenberg, where Luther now resided. "This is not my doings!" exclaimed the Reformer, "but would to God that I might rescue all captive consciences and empty every monastery. The breach is made!" Many worthy citizens offered to receive the nuns in their homes, which was accepted. Catharine Bora found welcome in the family of the burgomaster.

It has been charged against the new church movement that the special preferment to this last of the nine was brought about by Luther himself. He at this time had more solemn thoughts of ascending the scaffold as a martyr to his cause than to approach the hymeneal altar. Many months after this he replied to those who spoke to him of marriage: "God may change my heart, if this be His pleasure; but now at least I have no thought of taking a wife. Not that I do not feel any attraction for that estate—

I am neither a stick nor a stone—but every day I expect the punishment and death of a heretic.” However, on Sunday, October 9, 1524, he laid aside the garb of an Augustine monk and assumed the dress of a secular priest. He then made his appearance thus clad in the church, where this change caused a lively sensation. It was another token that the old religious ideas had passed away.

Shortly after this all the monks left the Augustine convent. Luther alone remained. His footsteps only re-echoed through the long galleries; he sat silent and solitary in the refectory, which had so long and until lately resounded with the chatter of the friars. An eloquent silence, attesting the doctor’s triumph, followed. The cloister had ceased to exist. About the end of December, 1524, Luther sent the keys of the monastery to the Elector, informing him that he should see where it might please God to feed him. The Elector presented the building to the University and invited Luther to continue his residence in it. This was accepted for the present.

Luther’s heart was formed for domestic life; he honored and loved the marriage state. Did not the comeliness and attractiveness of Catharine Bora add to his natural inclinations? For a long time his scruples and the fear of criticism which the marriage of a monk would occasion had prevented his thinking of her. He had offered poor Catharine first to Baumgartner of Nüremburg, and then to a Dr. Glatz, of Orlamund. But Baumgartner refused to take her, and she refused to accept Glatz; so he asked himself seriously whether he ought not to marry her himself?

His aged father, who had greatly grieved when his son embraced a monastic life, now urged him to enter the conjugal state. But one idea above all was daily present before the Doctor’s mind and

conscience: marriage is an institution of God; celibacy the work of the Popes. He had a horror of everything that emanated from Rome. At last, a single passage from the Scripture coming to his mind, broke the last link that attached him yet to his former creed: "It is not good that man should be alone!" It called him to the marriage altar as a man and as a reformer.

"If this monk marries," said his friend Schurff the lawyer, "he will make all the world and the devil burst with laughter and will destroy the work he has begun." This remark made a very different impression on Luther from what might be supposed. To brave the world, the devil and his enemies, and by an action which they thought calculated to ruin the Reformation, prevent its success being in any measure ascribed to him, this was all he desired. Accordingly he raised his head and replied: "Well, then I will do it; I will play the devil and the world this trick. I will content my father and marry Catharine." On the 11th day of June, 1525, Luther went to the house of his friend and colleague Armsdorf. Pomeranus, the pastor, blessed here the union. The celebrated painter Lucas Cranach and Doctor Apella witnessed the marriage. Melancthon was not present.

All Europe was disturbed by this bold act. The priest-husband was overwhelmed with accusations and faultfinding from every quarter. "It is incest," exclaimed Henry VIII. "A monk has wedded a vestal," said some. "Anti-Christ will be the offspring of such a union," said others; "for a prophecy announced that he will be born of a monk and a nun." To this the sage Erasmus replied, sarcastically: "If this prophecy is true, what thousands of Anti-Christ's must not already exist on earth!" But while the reformer was thus assailed, many wise and

moderate men, adherents even of the Catholic Church, undertook his defense. Melancthon especially, whom this bold step had at first alarmed, took up the cudgel for his friend, and even their enemies listened with respect. He said: "It is false and slanderous to maintain that there is anything unbecoming in my friend's marriage. The connubial life is one of humility, but also of a holier state, if there be any in this world; and the sacred Scripture represents it as honorable in the eyes of God." Luther was troubled at first when he saw such floods of anger and contempt poured upon him. Melancthon became more earnest in friendship and kindness. But there was also perfect happiness in the union. Within a year there came a little son to bless him. The sweets of domestic life dispersed the storms that the exasperation of enemies had first hurled over the well-matched couple.

The almost universal carnal corruption of the clergy had brought the priesthood into general contempt, from which the isolated virtues of a few faithful servants of the Church had not been able to extricate it. Domestic peace and conjugal fidelity were continually disturbed in town and in country by the gross passion of the high-living priests and monks. No one was secure from their persistent attempts of debauchery and seduction. They took the boldest advantage of the access allowed them into the families, and even the confidence of the confessional was used to instil a deadly poison into the souls of their penitents, to satisfy their guilty lust. Luther, with one bold stroke, hewed down the upas tree of celibacy of ecclesiastics and restored the sanctity of the marriage state. This put an end to many and immense secret crimes. The married reformers became models to their flocks in the most intimate and important relations of life. Luther's adherents

were not slow in rejoicing to see their ministers of the Gospel once more husbands and fathers.

(Data and facts of this episode are mostly taken from the historian, J. H. Merle d'Aubigné.)

Section VII.—Creed-Making and its Results.

As long as the great cause of the Reformation was in its primary stage of development, its evolutionary work was militant only; its attacks were directed against the overwhelmingly abused power of Catholicism. But after the period of negation and destruction passed over; after the first enthusiasm of its promulgators had accomplished complete severance from their mother of Rome; after priests and princes had joined forces to dissolve partnership with the old faith—a new era came, as it logically must come, reconstructing upon the debris of the wrecked building of a past religion the new edifice of another. Had there been but one chief leader, this goal could prove of no great difficulty. But the impulse given at Wittenberg acted with rapidity, spreading in its velocity throughout the continent. Germany, with Luther and Melancthon, did not long remain alone. Switzerland and its Zwingli loomed up as a contemporary. France and her Calvin came next. Holland and the Netherlands had their Esch and Yoe. In Scandinavia, two brothers, Olaf and Lars Peterson, headed the new religious movement. In England and Scotland the Reformation took a political as well as a religious tendency; Wycliffe and the Lollards were the foremost representatives of the new faith. Henry VIII. stood here at the head of the political cause against the Pope and his authority. In every land and country it boiled and fermented among the rulers and the people, joining the procession in the march

onward. Had all these united in one strong "new church," they might have stood against the world; but, unfortunately for them, every one of the leaders had sprung from the very bosom of the old church, and had imbibed from earliest training some strong and unconquerable Catholic predilections which became controlling in the several spheres where they now moved. It is not in human nature to throw off at will the impressions ingrained during childhood. The views of the leaders were as different and diversified as their characters and the peculiar traits of their native countries. Each one set to work to formulate a creed of his own. Soon there were almost as many Christian sects as there were chieftains in the cause of the Reformation. And it did not take long ere these antagonized one another as much, and in several instances more, than they did their arch-enemy of Rome. Their very worst foe could not have wished it better; and while every Papist rejoiced over this family feud, the Anti-Messiah, myself their prime antagonist, helped on the foment and disturbance in the most sly and underhand fashion possible.

Luther distinguished himself principally in his pride and inflexible temper in keeping up the division. Melancthon, with his mild and gentle disposition, tried everything in his power to bridge over some of the difficulties, but with hardly any results. The sturdy Augustine monk had been foremost to help demolish the material church of St. Peter; he bombarded it effectively with the all-powerful missiles of the Holy Scripture; but the gist of his creed, as a substitute for the old hierarchy, was the embodiment of a spiritual papacy which, if logically carried out, would tyrannize and oppress the mind and conscience far more than the object he fought so bitterly. The declaration of some of his chief tenets

was so contradictory and incompatible as to lead directly back to Rome, instead of forever parting with it. Among others, he maintained: (1) *That sacred Scripture is the source of all authority.* And yet, barely was the ink dry with which he penned this sweeping sentence, when in 1543 he declared *the laws of the Old Testament, inclusive of the Decalogue,* forever annulled. (2) We must be saved not by our works, but by our faith. (*Der Glaube allein macht selig.*)

Could he have looked through a spiritual telescope at these incongruous principles, he would have seen in the distant focus "Tetzel justified" in the sale of absolutions. The faith of the simple country folks in these sacred paper promises would, under Luther's own auspices, require not his reformation; their belief ought to be their salvation. Therefore Tetzel was not wrong! The heart of the old sturdy Reformer was in the right place, but his head ran away even in some of the great essentials of his ponderous work. Soon he found himself at loggerheads and enmity with his confreres and chief fellow-workers. No argument or persuasion could reconcile him with the clear-reasoning Zwingli and the more erudite Calvin, in spite of the very best efforts of their noble and sovereign friends. Here the germ was planted that grew to such bloody harvests later on between the dissenters, which was to ripen after many centuries to come.

Here was also a physiological explanation of the difference in the attitude which the great Reformer took towards the Hebrews. When Reuchlin, their supreme friend, was dead and his influence no longer prevailed, they became a thorn in Luther's side. His faith-principle compelled him to discard the Old Testament, whose closing sentences were a contradiction in words and spirit of his new

hobby. "The end of all things is, fear God and obey His commands, for this is the end of man" (Kohleth xii. 13). So he hated the living witnesses of the contradiction, and with the powerful language at his command, in his old age undid the kindness of his youth and exceeded in vituperation and malignity the worst of hatred against the Jews and their literature.

The storm brewing in every quarter against the Reformation broke forth in fearful fury without much delay. It started in Switzerland, where cantons were soon arrayed against cantons. Zwingli, with a handful of men, faced heroically the outbreak; he fell pierced by the lances of the assailants, the first martyr in the cause. Stultified Germany did not raise an arm in his defense. There is no more pathetic death recorded in the annals of history than that of the brave, noble defender of the new faith of Switzerland. In the ridiculously unevenly-matched battle at Cappel, where the five powerful Catholic cantons were arrayed in treble numbers against the dissenters of Zurich, when the action had scarcely begun, Zwingli in cuirass and helmet was at the post of greatest danger. At a moment when he had stooped down to console a dying man, I, Ben Beor, who had hurried hither to take a hand in the fray, followed him closely during the entire combat, hurled now a heavy stone from the eminence where I had posted myself. It struck him on the head with such force that it felled him to the ground and made him speechless. I hurried down to where he lay and dealt him two heavy blows, so that in his efforts to rise he staggered back. He was fearfully wounded. Twice he tries to stand, but now he receives a thrust from my lance; he falls back and sinks on his knees. Then he lifts up his head, and, gazing with a calm eye upon the trickling blood, exclaims in tremulous

words: "What matters this misfortune! They may kill the body, but they cannot kill the soul." He had scarcely uttered them when he sank backwards. There, under a tree, ever afterwards called the "Zwingli pear-tree," he remained lying on his back with clasped hands and eyes turned upwards to heaven. Two soldiers were prowling over the battle-field. When they came near the Reformer, one asked the dying man: "Do you wish for a priest to confess?" Zwingli, unable to speak, made signs in the negative. "If you cannot speak," said the other, "at least think of the Mother of God and call upon the saints." The expiring man again shook his head. "No doubt," exclaimed the first, "you are one of the heretics of the city." The other being curious to see the face of his foe, stooped down and turned the head of Zwingli in the direction of a camp-fire which burned near the spot. The soldier immediately let it fall to the ground. "I think," said he, amazed and surprised, "I think it is Zwingli." At this instant comes a brutal captain of Unterwalden. He has heard the last word of the soldier. "Zwingli!" he exclaims; "that vile heretic, that traitor!" Now raising his sword, he struck the dying Christian on the throat and shouted in violent passion: "Die, obstinate heretic!" Then the prostrate man expired. All this happened October 11, 1531.

France was not slow in following the struggle to the death of the new spirit which had invaded her religion, the Catholic Church. The learned Calvin had given the first active impulse to the Reformation movement, and the vivid wide-awake character of the nation took up with vehement ardor the long-suppressed anger against the Church. "Huguenots," the new sect called itself, most likely from the chief leader Hugues, although several other strong

reasons are given for that strange appellation. A desperate struggle had for several years been waged between the Catholics and the Reformers. No special agency was required to keep this alive and fiercely raging. The powerful opposing houses became the leaders of the conflict: the Guises for Rome, the Condés for the Huguenots. On the throne was the bigoted, weak-minded Charles IX., but his masculine, cruel and scheming mother, Catherine de Medici, was the real sovereign. Never had Ben Beor a representative who more eagerly would join my plans than this woman. The feeble Charles and his sickly brother Henry were childless. It was certain that Henry of Navarre, of the Bourbon line, an adherent of the Reformers, would be the next heir to the throne. He was by birth and education a Protestant, and therefore fiercely hated by the whole family. In 1570 a truce was patched up between the parties, who up to this time were engaged in continual war. This peace was to be made more secure by a marriage between the heretic crown prince, now only 20 years old, and Margaret of Valois, sister of the king, sacrificed to this political scheme, as she had been previously engaged to and dearly loved the Duke of Guise.

The ceremony was to take place on the 18th of August, 1572. The dowager queen had in the arrangement completed a plot which for treachery, deception and horror of execution surpassed any tragedy of ancient or modern times. The Huguenot leaders were enticed to come to Paris to be destroyed in a general massacre. After that the same scenes were to be enacted in the different parts of the kingdom, until the Protestants should be utterly extinguished on French soil. It was secretly arranged that this should begin at the sounding of the matin bell from the Church of St. Germain on

the morning of St. Bartholomew's day. Orders were confidentially issued to all the provincial cities of the realm to proceed in the same manner, until none of the Huguenots should be left to trouble the peace of Catholic France. The terrible programme was carried out to the letter. Charles IX. hesitated at first to sign the mandate, but was overborne by his mother and the Duke of Guise. In accordance with the warrant, the inhuman duke, at early dawn of this twenty-fourth day of August, sallied out with bands of his followers. He made his way to the hotel where Coligni lodged. This old admiral was the head and leader of the Huguenots. His assassins burst into the sleeping apartment and stabbed their helpless victim to death. They then threw his body out of the window into the street. Guise was waiting below on horseback. He dismounted and wiped the dust from the murdered man's face to make sure that there was no life remaining. The head of the great Coligni was cut off and sent as a trophy to the Cardinal of Lorraine. Now the bells of St. Germain were sounded and the general massacre of helpless men, women and children began. Paris soon reeked like a charnel-house. The gutters of the streets flowed with blood. The residence of every Huguenot had been marked, and now woe to those unfortunates! The city became a horrid uproar. Crowds of fugitives surged along the streets, pursued by other crowds with drawn swords, dripping with gore. When the pitiful wail of the dying began to rise from all quarters, the King suffered a momentary shudder. But he overcame this soon and shared with his mother and friends their insane delight. He, with Catherine and his brother Henry of Anjou, took his station at one of the windows of the Louvre, and with his own hands fired shot after shot from his fowling-piece after the fleeing heretics. For seven

days the murderous work continued, until at last death, drunk with the blood of thirty thousand victims, chanted "Te Deum laudamus." In some of the principal provincial cities the governors refused to obey the diabolical edicts of the court. The brave mayor of Bayonne answered the mandate in these words: "Your majesty has many faithful servants in this loyal town, but not one executioner." In other places the scenes were almost as horrible as those in Paris. The city of Meaux ran with the blood of the reformers. At Lacharité the massacre occurred on the 26th, and at Orleans on the 27th. Nor did this dreadful drama cease until October 3d, when it stained with the crimson life-fluid the surf beyond Bordeaux.

Poor Germany! In all the travail of civilization's efforts and labors, the scene of the contest and the battle-ground of the warring passions were always concentrated here. Luther, Calvin and Zwingli were dead, but their revolutionary work lived and grew into ponderous dimensions. Thus far the struggle had been local. At first Germany was affected; then came Switzerland, France, England and the Netherlands. As to Spain, the Reformation made no progress. Portugal and Italy despised the movement and proceeded in the old persecuting and intolerant track. Thus far, however, there had been no general or international conflicts between the Catholics and Protestants. Many symptoms had already appeared of the formation of a general league among the states which still held steadfast to the ancient religion against the Reformed faith. Nor can any one who understands the scope of my anti-messianic policy, to uphold the power of the Church and to recover the sadly lost unity that until lately had prevailed, fail to perceive that all my efforts now were spent to rally into one phalanx those sovereigns

who still recognized the supremacy of Rome, and to urge them on for a grand final struggle to recover the lost inheritance. The time had come, now or never, when I must move all the organic strength of what is left of Catholicism for the suppression of the great Protestant schism. It brought with it as a consequence the combination of the reformed states to prevent such a result. Germany was the doomed soil on which this harrowing issue must be fought. It commenced with the storming of the Council Hall in Prague on the 23d of May, 1618. History denominates it "The Thirty Years' War."

It is not my scope to enter into the details of this fearfully prolonged clash of arms in which almost all Europe participated. The earth never had seen such misery, such indescribable suffering and havoc. The nations poured out their blood and their treasures: Patriotism expended its utmost force to stand erect. Loyalty to chosen causes was never so matched before in straining every nerve for victory. Heroism of the sublimest as well as of the most brutal essence never flagged throughout all this long period to achieve wonders on both sides. Human endurance was tried to the snap of the muscles and nerves, to hold out often against the inevitable. A galaxy of men crowns these tear-washed annals. Why repeat here the names which every school-child commits to memory, or battles which fill the pages of every common history? Alas! out of the perished lives of the millions, the devastated lands and individual estates, the hunger and the suffering of the despairing masses, the conflagration of the cities, towns and hamlets, where the fire-fiend devours what battle has left; the cries of anguish and despair of starving widows and orphans; out of the pestilence and fever which stride in ghastly array over the battle-scarred countries and transform half the con-

continent into one festering, panting lazaretto; out of the fathomless, indescribable, unspeakable, writhing, quivering, revolting, hellish torments of humanity—what paltry, disappointing, woeful results in the grand finale of the re-established peace! In the city hall of Osnabrück, on the 24th day of October, it was decreed by the nations' congress there assembled, and after adjustment of the political issues, that religious freedom was now and henceforth and forever guaranteed and confirmed to the Lutherans and Calvinists. All my efforts had been in vain—"Sic transit gloria mundi!"

PHANTASMAGORIA XXI.

SABBATHAI ZEVI.

Section I.—Beautiful Esther.

While all the rest of Europe was fighting for liberty of conscience, in the Southern lands the brutal work of persecution went on with ever-increasing fury and callous barbarity. It was almost exclusively directed against the hapless, exiled Hebrews, who, under promise of security for their lives and scant possessions, were induced to settle for the time being under the government of King Ioão II. of Portugal. On payment of extravagant sums of money, Rabbi Isaac Aboab succeeded in securing temporary homes for the outcast people. Every one so coming had to submit to a head-tax of two ducats, an oppressive amount for those poor creatures, who had saved nothing when driven from their old homes. They were, however, largely assisted by charitable brethren from all over the world. On

paying the stated amount they were permitted to remain here in security for the period of eight months. The king himself provided cheap transportation in his ships during the granted time. It was stipulated that any Hebrew found in his kingdom at the expiration of such short period, without special permit, should forfeit personal liberty and be sold into slavery. Over twenty thousand families accepted these terms of momentary relief. Once domiciled, their good behavior, their cultured ways and their pitiful condition insured them the warm sympathy of Christian neighbors. There were among the Hebrews profoundly learned astronomers and mathematicians, and the ambitious sovereign was eager to engage them in his service. But nature itself seemed to conspire against the forsaken people.

Black pestilence, the never-ending scourge of these times, broke out again among the inhabitants, who, in their ignorance and superstition, assigned it as a punishment that their ruler had permitted the Israelites to come into his land. When, therefore, the eight months had expired, the callous command went forth that all who would not submit to baptism must depart. So most of the unfortunates were huddled like cattle into ships, consigned to the mercies of inhuman captains, who, after starving and maltreating their poor passengers, landed them on distant coasts in Arabia and Africa, there to become the victims of the wild tribes or the prey of beasts of the wilderness. But even this was not the worst. The stone-hearted monarch ordered all Jewish children under ten years of age taken from their parents, to be exported by special ships to some island across the ocean and there to be raised as Christians. The heartrending scenes which ensued are beyond description. One mother sank flat on her face before the king as he rode by, and with

sobs and wailing besought him to return her only little boy. The king put his spurs savagely into the flanks of his horse, but the beast, more merciful than his rider, passed over the prostrate form of the woman, not hurting her.

Among the distinguished families who preferred sham baptism to exile and the loss of an immense fortune was Francesco Perez Mendes, a member of an old Marrannen family of the Bevenisti. His beautiful, noble-minded wife, Donna Gracia Mendesia, joined him in this outward change of religion; but both remained true in their hearts and souls to the faith of their forefathers. Observing with over-scrupulous zeal all the outward requirements of the Church, they attended mass regularly and went to confession as often as the best of Papists, in order to avoid even the slightest suspicion of backsliding. In the privacy of their lives, however, they were most pathetically devoted to their ancient religion, and as far as possible practiced it in the recesses of the family. For generations the ancestors of husband and wife had been prosperous bankers in Lisbon, and now the united houses were counted as the wealthiest and most influential of all Europe. There was hardly any reigning prince or potentate who had not become indebted to the firm, and who had not entrusted at one time or another to their sagacity and scrupulous honesty the finances of court and state.

In the fearful crisis which had now overtaken the Jews, the Mendes became the veritable angels for the distressed and despairing. This had to be done with the utmost caution, for if detected in their princely charities and the superhuman exercise of benevolence, the never-sleeping Inquisition would eagerly have made an end to their existence and swallowed up their coveted fortune. The means by

which they successfully reached the countless channels of misery never became known, despite the argus eyes of their prying enemies. It became a common saying among the relieved sufferers, that a second "Beautiful Esther" had arisen to stand by them in the hour of their great need, and daily prayers and blessings were showered upon the unknown benefactors. In the middle of the sixteenth century Mendes died, leaving to his wife the care of their only daughter Reyna. He endowed the widow with his share of the boundless fortune and appointed her the head of the banking house, which consisted of several members of his and her family. She was a phenomenal woman, gifted with all the graces and comeliness of her sex, possessing a wonderful genius, sagacity, foresight and administrative ability. Although she loved intensely the land of her birth, it now became unbearable to her.

When the greatest danger to her co-religionists had passed, she quietly and gradually wound up the financial affairs of the house in Lisbon, turned into ready cash and bills of exchange its assets, and leaving what real estate could not be disposed of to the tender mercies of the government and priests, then secretly went with the whole family to Antwerp in Belgium. At this place her nephew, Ioão Miguez, had long since established a powerful branch of the banking house, and from here the family of the Mendes, with their high standing in the Dutch community, their exhaustless means and influence, soon became the centre of a colony of the fugitive Marrannen.

When the report of these doings reached the beads of the southern Inquisition it was feared that a nucleus of a powerful opposition against them was growing up in the northern lands, and I, Ben Beor, being near the seat of the trouble, was commissioned

to thwart the baneful efforts. Charles V., grandson of Ferdinand and Isabella, was now Emperor of Germany and King of Spain. By right of his maternal grandmother Maria he was the regent also of Belgium and the Netherlands. Cognizant and envious of the great wealth of the Mendes, I watched eagerly for an opportunity to engulf them with criminal charges and have their treasures and estates confiscated.

Furnished with authority to investigate the past lives of the several members of these New Christians and watch over their present doings, I repaired to Antwerp, and there succeeded in cultivating a close and intimate relationship with the banking family. I had introduced myself as a government inspector of imports, and as such had the right of access to the books of the firm. These I found scrupulously correct. They were in charge of the widow's brother-in-law, Diego Mendes. An expert accountant, knowing that the written affairs of the house were subject at any moment to official examination, his work was done so as to be ever ready for such trial. It was impossible to find throughout the extensive monetary and mercantile affairs any shortcomings. During the transaction of this official business the woman was constantly by my side, and it was remarkable what memory and judgment she displayed in the explanation of such points as required statements of detail. My conduct towards her was studiously suave and cordial. From debits and credits the conversation often turned to topics of religion and politics, for I secretly had planned to draw her into some committal by which I might get a clue for criminating charges. But the woman proved to be my master in *finesse* and discernment. She must have instinctively guessed the nature of my objects. Never evading a question, always

ready to make an answer, yet a trained lawyer could not have been more precise and less liable to misconstruction or misrepresentations.

These people have become by their sad experiences wary like foxes and sly like serpents, and these traits had culminated in this woman to masterly perfection. In fact, it is astounding how, through all the long years of tribulation, the weaker sex in Israel bore bravely, unflinchingly and loyally the greater share of the sorrowful fate of the race. The preservation of the stock must be largely ascribed to the patience, fortitude and moral character of its females, who, despite the greater sensitiveness of feeling and the physical disparity of sex, never swerved from the path of duty or forsook the allegiance to their faith and kindred. In many instances they might have saved life and purchased comfort—yea, even wealth and rank—by abandoning the cause of their people and going over to the enemy; but in all trials, with misery and death before their eyes, they proved even more steadfast and firm than their male relatives and friends.

My occupation with the books was suddenly interrupted. Diego Mendes one afternoon was taken seriously ill and had to be carried to his home. Notwithstanding the best medical attendance and the most assiduous nursing, he died in a few days, leaving a disconsolate widow, the younger sister of Signora Gracia, and an only daughter, named after the aunt—Gracianna. There was the most intense, heart-rending lamentation, mourning and weeping. At the funeral obsequies all Antwerp seemed to have turned out to show last honors to the deceased and highest respect to the bereaved family. From the deathbed scene I, however, received the clue which I had been seeking so assiduously. Credible information was at hand that after a priest had bestowed

the last sacrament on the dying man according to the rites of the Catholic Church, and after the ministrant had departed, a rabbi entered the gloomy chamber and, while all the others left so as not to be witnesses in case of an accusation, the Jewish prayers and ceremonies for the dying had been performed also. If this could be proven it was the worst form of "Judaizing"—would have subjected the entire estate to confiscation and every member of the family to imprisonment. All depended now on finding the rabbi. Had we been in Spain I could have bought any number of witnesses on threat of torture; but among the stolid boors of the North, without a grain of sentimentality in their compositions, sturdy and unbendable in their feeling of right and justice, the Inquisition was already in bad odor. Here it needed at least evidence of presumptive guilt before the native officers would move, and then in many instances everything went on so slowly and deliberately that victims were rather allowed to escape than be persecuted. Never before had I known the power of money exercised so effectively as here. Wielded by a woman like Gracia, of such tact, sagacity and shrewd calculation, every step I made was counter-balanced by gold and popularity. The breath of the reformatory spirit had been wafted, too, across the borders from Germany and fiercely agitated the masses of the Dutch nation, kindred in reasoning and belief to their Teutonic neighbors. Nothing but the iron hand of Spain, which held in its clutch the throat of these people, prevented the religious revolution from conquering their land. When I therefore brought the accusation of Judaizing against the Mendes family before the imperial Fiscal, somebody informed them of the impending danger, and every step in the prosecution met with delay and procrastination.

It happened at this time, fortunately for my victims, that the court at Vienna was in pressing and immediate want of large sums of money. Negotiations had been under way to furnish such, already before the death of Diego. Now these were brought to an issue by the sagacious woman giving the most favorable terms to Charles V., on condition that all proceedings against her and hers before the Holy Office should be unconditionally quashed. The urgency of the Emperor's troubles caused him to finish the transaction by acceptance of this clause. The securities being exchanged and the money paid over, all my efforts proved nugatory. My connection with the persecuting plot had been kept secret, and my position therefore was not compromised, so that I could continue to watch and wait. Seeing that I was outgeneraled and foiled everywhere by the sly Gracia, and could do nothing against her ever wide-awake capacity, I directed myself now to her younger widowed sister, Bianca, bringing myself into her good graces, and from the familiar connection in her neighborhood spying out some plausible way to overwhelm the hated house with disaster.

This woman was as giddy, senseless, frivolous and vain as her sister was noble, firm and strong of character. She listened readily to my honeyed words, and I soon was in high favor and confidence with her, contrary to the warnings from some other members of the family. But I could learn very little from her concerning the plans and manœuvres of the firm; she was never trusted to know its internal affairs and had been kept in ignorance of its secret proceedings. She often complained to me about this, what she called, unfairness and injustice, and I instilled into her mind poisonous discontent and rebellion against her kindred. This much we both could readily perceive, that there was unusual activity

going on in the bank. Loads of specie were being received and shipped to foreign parts. Sales of estates were made, even under unfavorable conditions, and it seemed as if a concentrated gathering of all the available assets of the house was in progress.

Nearly two years elapsed when, at this juncture, a strange event transpired which bore serious consequences. The nephew, Ioaō Miguez, unexpectedly and to the surprise of everybody, eloped with Reyna, the only daughter of Gracia. The beautiful, accomplished and finely-educated girl had been admired and wooed by the highest nobles and her hand was sought by lords and princes. The young couple fled to Venice. The mother resolved forthwith to follow them, and gave notice to the sister to prepare for accompanying her. I received a polite invitation to form one of the escorts of the family. This was, as may be readily surmised, accepted. The whole proceeding had been a very strange affair, masterly planned and executed. When we arrived at Venice we were received with open arms and jubilant greetings by the elopers. Here I learned, too, that the palatial residences in Antwerp had been sold, the business wound up entirely, and that a single confidential clerk only was left behind to attend to little matters which remained unfinished. The clandestine marriage was a successful ruse for the whole family to emigrate unmolested. And I, benighted fool that I was, had been circumvented by this brave woman, without even a suspicion that all was pre-arranged and schemed beforehand.

Venice was no longer the mistress of the sea. Her continual wars with neighboring states, caused by arrogant pugnacity, had gradually brought the proud city of commerce and maritime power into decline. Especially had she been chastised by the

Turks under the great Sultan Suleiman, who exercised now a kind of dictatorship over the humbled city. Here I succeeded in inveigling the discontented Bianca into a complete breach with her sister and family. She demanded peremptorily her own and her daughter's share of the inheritance. This being resisted by Gracia as the head of the house and as the legally appointed guardian of her niece Gracianna, a treacherous complaint was therefore laid before the Signoria, the municipal authorities of the city, wherein the misguided widow not only sued for her portion of the estate, but also lodged information that the firm intended shortly to transfer the princely wealth of the whole family to Turkey, there publicly to rejoin Judaism, while she and her daughter were determined to stay as good Christians at their present domicile and use their wealth for the benefit of the city and the Church. The Venetian authorities, too glad to get hold of so promising a prey, did not hesitate a moment to entertain the accusation, summoned the parties before their courts and placed them under strict surveillance to prevent their flight. Not satisfied with having acted the despicable part of informer against her own flesh and blood, Bianca sent me to France, where the house had large interests, there to make charges against the Mendes as having been guilty of treason against the Catholic Church by secretly practicing the religion of their ancestors. Henry II., who reigned then in Paris, greedily availed himself of this pretext to confiscate what property the banking house owned in his realm and to repudiate the state's indebtedness, which had been contracted previously.

Poor Gracia! how all these unforeseen troubles must have tried her great soul, and how the treason of her dearly loved but deluded sister must have troubled her! Yet she lost not courage and soon

became full mistress of the painful situation. During my temporary absence a complete recouiliation of the sisters was effected. An appeal for protection was then made to the Sultan Suleiman and powerful influence brought to bear upon him. He peremptorily demanded the release of Donna Gracia and placed the rights and liberty of the family under his special care. Within a very short time the firm was established in Constantinople, bringing with them the entire family, their wealth and a whole train of Spanish and Portuguese Marrannen, most of whom were in possession of great riches. Soon their new home felt the beneficent hand of Donna Gracia and her kindred. The newcomers formed themselves into a colony, joining with great *eclat* the never-forgotten, ever dearly cherished religion of their fathers; building a magnificent synagogue and erecting schools and colleges as well as almshouses and orphan asylums. They elected the renowned and profoundly learned Rabbi Joseph Ibu-Lab, expatriated by Spain, as their chief spiritual guide, and they became from here the centre of relief for the amelioration of the pitiful condition among the Hebrews all over the European continent. Poets and historians vied with one another to do honor to the remarkable woman who now resumed her Portuguese name Charma, immortalized in poetry and prose as the Second Esther of the house of Israel.

Section II.—Scientists and Literati.

The power of the priests as far as to be a union was broken forever. Instead of warring against the masses and holding them down in ignorance and superstition, there would be, as became apparent everywhere, henceforth a continual feud among the different sects and creeds. Persecution, hatred and

torture would not cease, but in the future these would be employed, even with increased bitterness, church against church and priest against minister. They would so weaken one another that, as a supreme agency of control over the minds and consciences, no reliance dared to be placed upon either in their divided state. Envy, rivalry and jealousy would now continue to undermine what strength there had been heretofore in the altar, and the ultimate outcome, as could be clearly foreseen, must culminate in a reign of intolerance and illiberalism. Such was the cursed result of the Reformation and the Thirty Years' War.

Here I was, signally defeated and had lost my cause. Worst of all, this had been brought about largely by the abuse, scheming and intrigues of a wily and bad clergy in the Church. And now an equally great danger threatened the second great potency of my mission. The foundation of the thrones became insecure, unknown to the crowned heads, but perfectly palpable to my prophetic sight. The chains which had shackled Liberty and Right through all these thousand years visibly became rusty and corroded. There is music in the air which I can no longer hush, and which must at no distant day awake the slumbering powers of Freedom and Truth. Not that I am afraid of the repeated outbreaks by a brutal and benighted rabble, who had before, in their hunger, despair and debased serfdom, risen in revolts, to be butchered and slain like wild beasts. Danger threatened from other quarters which all my cunning and wiles will not much longer be able to withstand. The very fact of its insidious working makes it all the more irresistible. Since the last hundred years there has arisen a galaxy of spirits, unprecedented in number and high calibre, giants of minds who overturn all preconceived sys-

tems of science and art and traverse high into the realms of literature. It is indeed the golden era of the mind. The printing press, its mistress, helps with omnipotent sway to disseminate the long restrained rush of human genius. Contrary to my warning, in face of my remonstrances, the sovereigns and political heads will not raise a finger to suppress these worst agitators against their interests; nay, in many instances they caress the enemy who batters down the very gates of their security. Such is human nature, fallacy and blindness! They ridicule the idea that there is any destructive connection between the progress of science, art and literature and their divine right of absolute rule. Experience, however, will soon teach them better. I can here cite but some of the most prominent examples.

The earliest of revolutionist-disturbers of ancient and traditionally founded facts was, as usual, in the fields of destroying conservatism, a profoundly learned German, one Nicholas Copernicus, born at Thorn in Prussia, February 19, 1473. He was the intellectual giant who at one fell swoop overthrew the old and sanctioned Ptolemaic theory of the stellar universe and substituted a new and unassailable system in its place. On his deathbed he was handed the first copy of his great work, "De Orbium Caelestium Revolutionibus." When he closed his eyes forever on May 24, 1543, he had advanced the world in knowledge of the Cosmos many thousand years, and shattered into atoms the old superstitions concerning the same.

A worthy successor to this Teutonic mind appeared in the distinguished person of a Danish nobleman, Tycho de Brahe, born at Knudstorp in Scania, December 4, 1546. With his inherited wealth he was able to follow a native inclination for astronomy. As a favorite of princes and kings, he

developed a knowledge of the heavenly bodies as even the greatest lights of antiquity dared not dream of. When he died at Prague, the friend and protégé of Emperor Rudolph, October 13, 1601, he left his incomplete labors in worthy hands. The mantle of his genius had fallen upon Johannes Keppler, another German, born at Magstatt, near Weil, in Wurtemberg, December 27, 1571. On reaching manhood he joined the spreading religious Reformation, and for his great ability and learning was appointed professor at the University in Gratz. Poverty and family troubles soon made him accept the proffered place of assistant to Tycho de Brahe, with whom he completed the great discovery of the system of laws governing the constellations of the heavenly bodies. Struggling with adversity and contrary circumstances, waiting for over a quarter of a century until enabled, in spite of all difficulties, to publish the result of his scientific investigations, "The Rudolphine Tables," he consoled himself for all the untoward hindrances in his unparalleled mind-labors, by exclaiming:—"God has waited six thousand years for an observer, well may I wait a century for a reader!" When he died of disappointment, fatigue and want of care, at Ratisbon, whither he had travelled to make a last effort for obtaining from the imperial assembly the arrears of his long-unpaid salary, his earthly departure taking place November 15, 1630, he had already been preceded by another human mind-star of first magnitude, in a different quarter of the hemisphere.

Giordano Bruno, born under the happy sky of Italy, at Nola, near Naples, his natal day being forgotten, he became first a Dominican monk. Of that independent mind which acknowledges no authority, no matter how time-hallowed, his skeptical philosophy became so obnoxious to the orthodox order that its

superior expelled him from the ranks and drove him from his native land. Like unto the astronomers, his contemporaries who pounded to piecemeal the ancient notions of the movement of the stars, so this friar smashed the reasonings of the antiquated Aristotle. To the careful observer it must become patent that these newly-risen innovators went hand in hand and became possible only in their might and power by the mutual evolution of uncontrollable facts. The banished Bruno led a roving life, teaching and lecturing at all learned institutions, which were eager, from the renown which had preceded him, to hear his eloquent logic and conclusions. He became personally acquainted at Wittenberg with Luther and the other great lights of the Reformation. Alas! amidst all the triumphs which greeted him everywhere, like a true son of the South, he pined for his native country and actually returned at last to Venice. Here he was arrested by the minions of the Holy Office, sent to Rome, and refusing to recant his radical free-thought principles, was burned at the stake February 17, 1600.

Contemporary with him was an even more bold and reformatory spirit—Galilei Galileo—also an Italian, born at Pisa, February 15, 1564, a descendant of a noble Florentine family, the Bonajulis. Well educated, with a finely developed talent for the arts, especially painting and music, graduating in medicine, he finally abandoned all these for his native inclination in mathematics and the natural sciences. Through his inventive genius, for the first time in the history of the world men were enabled to observe the heavens with a telescope, and greater surprise and wonderment had never been in store for his fellow-beings. By its means he confirmed and extended all modern discoveries concerning the stellar spheres, especially the facts contradictory to

orthodox Bibliomania that the earth stands still and the sun and planets move around it. All the works of this great scholar and those of his renowned predecessors were placed on the "Index Expurgatorius," which made it mortal sin for any good Christian to peruse or touch. He soon was declared suspected of heresy. Sentence quickly followed, which was solemnly pronounced on June 22, 1633. It set forth the offense of the accused—teaching condemned propositions, requiring him to abjure his errors and all other heresies against the Catholic Church—condemned him to be imprisoned during the pleasure of the Inquisition and to recite once a week for three years the seven penitential psalms.

Galileo, remembering the fate of some of his unfortunate colleagues, made his abjuration with all the formalities which attended such proceedings. Clad in sackcloth and kneeling, he swore upon the Gospel never again to teach the earth's motion and the sun's stability; he declared his detestation of the proscribed opinions, and promised to perform the penance laid upon him. Then rising, all the shame of his cowardice came upon him and all the pride of his manhood returned, as he exclaimed in defiance of his persecutors, the immortal words: "E pur si muovo!" ("It moves in spite of all this"). Yet, strange to say, he was permitted to depart after a short confinement. Continued vexations, however,—the death of a favorite daughter, and bodily infirmities, he becoming entirely deaf—brought on him fever and palpitation of the heart, and he died in retirement at Arcetri, January 8, 1642.

Shortly after, and in the northern horizon of Great Britain, another great master-mind was ushered into this world. William Harvey was born at Folkestone, England, April 1, 1578. After taking his degree of M. D., studying for this purpose at Padua

in Italy, he settled in London and there became in 1607 a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians. Soon after he made his celebrated discovery of the circulation of the blood, thereby clearing up one of the profoundest mysteries of nature, more conducive to the enlightenment of physical knowledge than anything which had been done so far in that department of medical science. Political complications of his time tended greatly to embitter his illustrious life, and the jealousy of his benighted colleagues added to his disappointments and heavy struggles. He lived, however, to be considered the first anatomist and physician of his time, and to see his discoveries universally acknowledged. He died in London, June 3, 1657.

Contemporary with him and of the same land and language, came one of the most phenomenal and gigantic minds of any age or clime, the poet and dramatist, William Shakespeare. He was born at Stratford-upon-Avon, England, April 23, 1564, of comparatively obscure parents, under unpromising conditions, receiving but a scant education, and living up to the dawn of his manhood and genius a life little better than that of a poacher and vagrant. Thereafter, however, like a cycle of brilliant meteors shot forth from his brain and hands a wealth of literary treasures which blinded and bewildered the astounded contemporaneous witnesses, and which will continue to amaze the cultured world till Time shall be no more. Such insight of human character, such knowledge of men's passions; such incarnation of right, truth, liberty and love; such incomparable tracery of wit, humor and burlesque; such elevated diction and eloquence; such cutting satire; all this thrown over every phase of the living and the dead; over childhood, man's estate, and old age; over male and female; combining history and fiction; marshal-

ing in quick procession mythology, the theological Christian Church, the Jew and the Gentile—cunningly disguising in his hero of Shylock the detestable common prejudices of race, and in his Moor of Venice the curse of caste; the best of Moses, Christ, Confucius, Plato, Socrates; the legislator, philosopher, scientist and statesman, culled and combined for the play on the stage that mimics the world—all of this is the work of the greatest intellectual hero and educator, of the unsurpassed author of Britain or any other land, who departed this world, April 23, 1616.

And as if the measure of knowledge were to be filled to overflowing, there arose beside a host of other great celebrities in the three united kingdoms, one more especially to be mentioned among the giants in the realms of science, the renowned Sir Isaac Newton. He was born at Woolsthorpe, in Lincolnshire, England, December 25, 1642. He never knew his father, and was but indifferently treated by his mother, who remarried during his infancy. Retired and shrinking as a child, apparently dull and backward in his studies, yet the fire of his genius, like that of his illustrious compatriot Shakespeare, broke forth at the verge of manhood, and he soon astonished the world with the celebrated discovery of the law of gravitation, following up this his most eminent of achievements with a number of other great mathematical discoveries and physical inventions. Crowned with glory and with years, he died at Kensington, near London, March 20, 1727.

In France, too, illustrious additions to the galaxy of the human mind arose at this time. Foremost among these was Charles de Secondat Montesquieu, born at the Chateau La Brede, near Bordeaux, January 18, 1689. Receiving fine educational training in his youth, gifted with even abnormal strength of

mind for reasoning and investigation, he early dived into the depths of the already heaving and boiling elements of an intellectual awakening, and soon produced his ever-memorable work, "De l'Esprit des Lois" (The Spirit of the Law), a master conception of the political and social fundamental structure for modern conditions of state and church. The views and principles expressed therein, logical, irresistible and radical, shook all intelligent Europe from end to end. Twenty-two editions had to be made in eighteen months, and it was translated within a very short time into every language of the continent. The inferential outcome of these two volumes was Revolution and the Republic. He was only to see the beginning of his labors, dying at Paris, February 10, 1755, in his sixty-sixth year of age.

His junior compatriot by about ten years was no less a man of spirit, capacity, genius, but also full of caprice and whims—François Marie Arouet de Voltaire. He saw the light of this mundane sphere at Paris, November 21, 1694. His cynical and doubting disposition soon became apparent. Everything which man had thus far considered sacred and venerable was to him mockery and sham. Endowed with a giant mind for destruction, he took hold, like Samson of old, of the pillars of the church and state and tried to pull them down. Yet, while he succeeded with his voluminous writings to stir them from their bases, his supercilious vanity, arrogance and malice proved him not equal to the task, and he died in his native city, May 30, 1778, the most over-rated and comparatively least operative factor in the progress of civilization.

A by far less presumptuous and unpretending spirit, with the modesty of a child and the strength of a Cyclops, arose in neighboring Holland, in the person of Baruch Spinoza, one of the detested

Jews, a direct offspring of the fugitive Marrannen, born, as is surmised, at Amsterdam, November 24, 1632. His parents, in connection with numerous other exiles from the Pyrenean peninsula, had found in the hospitable lands of the Dutch a refuge place and home, where Israelites were permitted to openly recant their forced adherence to Christianity and profess the religion of their fathers, for which they had suffered and endured so much. When, therefore, in his fifteenth year, barely having finished his talmudical and secular education, young Baruch evinced a skeptical tendency, worrying his teachers, Rabbi Morteira, and the stern Chief-Rabbi Menasse ben Israel with suspicious questions and doubting interrogations, they looked with great concern upon the precocious youth and warned him to desist from pursuing such trains of dangerous investigation. His Latin tutor, the physician Van Ende, however, a renowned linguist and himself a skeptic, who had taken a special liking to the bright youth, encouraged him in the pursuit of negative philosophy and opened to him the most celebrated writings in that direction. The young student was accused of disregarding the laws of Moses, condemning the Talmud, denying the immortality of the soul, and ridiculing the reality of supernatural revelation and angelic communications.

Publishing a number of heretical works, amongst which the "Ethica," and the "Tractatus Theologico-Politicus" immediately gave him the reputation of a great philosopher, he was summoned before a rabbinical tribunal, but anticipated excommunication by formally withdrawing himself from the synagogue. Neglecting the repeated citations of the Sanhedrim, and after several threatenings and the offer of a pension if he would desist from his writings and teachings, which undermined the barely resuscitated and

reviving Judaism, at length in 1656 the "Cherem Godol," the Anathema Marantha, was officially promulgated against him. It reads thus: "The masters of the Mahamad (title of the Hebrew synod of Holland, consisting of the rabbis and the officers of the congregations,) make known to all that some time ago information had reached us of the wicked opinions and acts of Baruch Spinoza (de Espinoza), and we in different ways and modes had endeavored to withdraw him from his evil roads. Since we, however, could not succeed in this, but on the contrary received every day more proofs of his heresy, which he exercised and taught, and everything being proved by credible witnesses, he therefore has been condemned for all this. Now in presence of the Masters, 'Chachamin' (sages), it is unanimously decreed that said Espinoza be banned and cut off from the community of Israel, as by these presents, they have placed him in the following 'Cherem':

"With concurrence of the angels and the verdict of the saints, we ban, sever and maledict Baruch de Espinoza, in accordance with the blessed Lord and His sacred congregation, before the holy books of the Torah and the six hundred and thirteen commands which are contained therein, with the excommunication with which Joshua has banned the city of Jericho; with the curse by which Elisha has cursed the youths; with the maledictions which are recorded in the law. Accursed be he by day and night; accursed when he lies down and when he rises, in his coming and his going. 'Adonoy' may not pardon him! His wrath and vengeance be upon this man and lay upon him all the maledictions which are written in this book of the law. 'Adonoy' extinguish his name from under the heavens, and separate the evil from the community of Israel, with all the curses of the firmament, which are written in the

book of the law. And all ye who cling to 'Adonoy,' may ye all live.

"We warn you that nobody, orally or in writing, shall hold intercourse with him; nor do him favor; nor live with him under the same roof or within four ells of his person; nor read aught of writings which he has made or written.

"Aera mundi 1656. Month of 6th of Av."

But the time had gone by when such flashes of cold lightning had any special terrors. The excommunicated philosopher, banished by request of his foes from Amsterdam, had learned the art of polishing lenses for the astronomers, and following this precarious mode of earning a living, after traveling hither and thither, found a home at last among friends and admirers at the Hague. Declining several offers of kindness for office or pension, he endured the toils and sufferings of poverty, protracting his labors until deep into the night. For months he would not leave the room, following his manual labor of polishing glass to gain a scant support, but reveling in the luxury of creating a religio-ethical system which even during his lifetime was titled by his name. He died here, February 21, 1677, in the prime of his manhood, buried in an unknown grave, wept over by a few friends only, and under the malediction of men whose memory will be forgotten and lost when the name of their victim shall live till the trumpet of resurrection brings the dead to life again.

Now, amidst this ebullition and the fermenting process of the master spirits of these times, a counterpoise must be found by the Anti-Messiah, neutralizing in some shape and to some extent the prodigious influences their efforts would exercise among the masses. More and more I, Ben Beor, was losing my foot-hold in the mission of Wrong against Right, Serfdom against Liberty, and Ignorance

against Enlightenment; so I determined to make another grand concentrated effort to achieve my purpose and demolish the victories gained so signally by my adversaries. If it succeeded I might well defy science, art, philosophy and literature, and laugh at the Reformers and the Reformation.

I had hied to Constantinople to see if my labors could not be brought to bear by some intrigue to ruin the growing Perez Mendes colony. Here, amidst my undermining schemes, I learned from a half-crazed Jewish traveller, who called himself the preacher Abraham Jachina, a curious story that commended itself as a starting point for my future plans.

Section III.—Sabbathai Zevi.

There lived in the inconsiderable city of Smyrna in the Levant a Jewish dealer in small wares and poultry. His name was Mordechai Zevi. His stall and residence formed one of the quaint hovels in the street where most of his race dwelt. Late in life had been born to him a third son. The mother unfortunately died on the child seeing this world's light. It being Friday, after the day of rest having been ushered in, the father named the little newcomer Sabbathai. The infant grew up under the care of his nurse to unusual sturdy physical proportion and precocious mental development, being able to walk when six months old and speaking fluently after one year. All the old cronies and wiseacres prophesied great things for the babe's future. At five years he had mastered the Hebrew language sufficiently to commence the study of the Talmud. His principal teacher was the then celebrated Rabbi Joseph Iskaja. At ten years the boy received the honorable title of "Chaver" (Bachelor), and was soon after introduced

into the mysterious and mystic lore of the Kabbala. According to the custom of the country he was married to a beautiful girl when yet a lad, but he showed so little domestic inclination and neglected his child-wife so constantly that she soon applied for a divorce and was readily granted such by the authorities of the synagogue. At twenty he was the finest and most remarkable looking man in the neighborhood. Like Saul of old he towered head and shoulders over the people, his long black hair falling in natural ringlets over his back and breast. An immense forehead, dark piercing eyes and well-proportioned, finely chiseled features, with a full beard, gave him a distinguished appearance.

A war between Turkey and Venice had made commerce in the Eastern metropolis insecure, and several European houses, especially Dutch and English, opened their mercantile bureaus at Smyrna. Mordechai Zevi became commercial agent for one of these, and by promptness, industry and scrupulous honesty soon prospered for himself and his employers. Now the wealth of the doting father could supply all the whimsical and extravagant notions of his already famous son, who, at the age of eighteen, had been honored by the "Beth Din" with the title of a "Chacham" (Doctor of Divinity). He became an ascetic, fasting, praying and seeking solitude. They had married him for the second time, but his young and comely spouse fared no better than the first, and sought and obtained a divorce also. His renown for saintliness and oracular lore spread far and wide, and was helped to extend by the father declaring often and loud that the great success in his financial operations was due as a blessing from heaven for the piety and devotion of the God-chosen son. The English merchants who came here to trade were all pietistic dissenters, and brought with them the

widespread belief of the coming of the millennium, which, according to their leader's calculation from the Apocalypse, was certainly to occur in the year 1666, to be especially distinguished by the Jews returning in great glory to the Holy Land, there to rebuild the temple and become the mightiest nation of the world. Such fanatic reports reached Sabbathai Zevi, and finding in the mysticism of the Book of Light (Sohar), the greatest of all cabalistic writings, proof of this delusion, in one of his hallucinated trances, which now occurred to the dreaming enthusiast, he fancied himself selected as the "Messiah ben David." With an assurance bordering on madness he proclaimed suddenly this mission of Israel's early redemption to his ever-growing train of followers. The commotion became so great that the college of rabbins, with the old teacher Joseph Eskafa, pronounced the excommunication over the now twenty-two year old pretender and his friends and banished the whole crowd from the city. Nothing had been heard since from Sabbathai Zevi. It was reported that he sought refuge in a cave in Southern Arabia, and it is more than likely that he there was slain by some of the wandering tribes. But among the people far and wide, Jewish, Christian and Heathen, it was believed that he only abided his time, and at its fullness he certainly would re-appear to fulfill his peerless celestial mission.

"So far goes my story," said the preacher; "but I find," he added, "so much and such remarkable resemblance in your stature and mien to the vanished Smyrna Messiah that I actually took you at first to be him. Two drops of water could not be more similar to one another than is your appearance to his." Meanwhile the excitement caused by the expectation of the early re-appearance of the second coming of Christ and his anointed prophet had

assumed abnormal proportions. "Verily, were I in your place, nothing should prevent me from assuming the glorious role. I have found lately this apocryphal scroll in the ruins of the holy temple"—and here he drew from his kaftan a yellowed vellum manuscript, which he read. It contained the following prophecy: "I, the son of the patriarch Abraham, immured for forty years in a cave, was in vain waiting for the promised time of the miracles. Then came to me a voice from heaven (Bath Kol) heralding the period near at hand and saying, 'A son will be born in this world in the year 1626 (5386 A. M.) in the hour of the coming Sabbath, wherefore his name shall be called Sabbathai. He will demolish the great Dragon, for he is the true Messiah who shall conquer the world without warfare.'"

Nothing could have suited my scheme better to overthrow the march of intelligence now rushing over the continents, than the counter-play of rousing to fever frenzy the teeming and easily excited masses of the East and West. The misery of the common herd of humanity, always verging on the point of starvation; the disgust prevailing among the Gentiles, with their impotent idols and their rapacious priesthood, ready to rush over to anything that offered something more plausible and promising; the angry excitement between the old and new church in Christendom, which yet was prevailing upon every inch of soil in Europe, and, no matter its outcome and result, plunged the people deeper and deeper into the mire of pauperism from which no religious movement would extricate them and give them bread and rights; the unparalleled and yet not ended sufferings, oppressions and persecutions of the Hebrews, who kept the easily inflamed last hope of their dispersion wide-awake, the ever-cherished longing to return to the land of their forefathers,

there to rebuild the holy temple and become once more a nation of the world—all these conditions combined, united the Idolaters, the Christians and Jews in being ripe for rising under the leadership of the right man, into one great upheaval, to rush over the earth with a cataclysm of fury which would engulf the entire established order of society, state, and religion. So, in connection with my new confederate, a most wily plotter, I started the great drama that should at no distant day accomplish my all-overwhelming purpose. Salonichi, a not far distant city, full of dervishes, kabbalists and monks, was chosen as the first scene for the prelude of our performance. Jachini went thither and heralded the early resurrection and re-appearance of the long dead Messianic Sabbathai Zevi, and that he would enter in great splendor and glory as his first resting place at this renowned city. "Prepare!" the preacher cried, "for the coming of the Messiah, when the long-expected Star of Bethlehem shall reappear in the heavens. [This event had been calculated by the modern astronomers to occur in the now beginning, year 1666.] Assemble on the night of the Lord's nativity and ye shall behold the sign of the coming of the Eternal!" In consequence of his prophecy the whole city turns out at dark of Christmas night, Jachini standing in their midst upon a raised dais. Every eye is directed to the sky. Suddenly at midnight the expected celestial guest breaks forth upon the vision of the excited multitude. A scarlet, flaming stellar body of the first magnitude lights up the fleecy clouds, surrounding in silvery sheen the full orbit of the moon, and at sight the masses send forth in one great shout of exultation: "Hosannah! Hosannah!"

Presently the fanfares of cornet and trumpet-blasts are heard from afar, and against the star-lit

sky arise the black outlines of a great multitude, approaching in procession with a sea of torches to the now wild city. The cry of "The Messiah hath come!" rends the air, and the now frenzied crowd rushed forth to meet the triumphal entry of the coming Redeemer. At the city gate the leader of the procession halts, and by his order the scroll of the law, the Torah, is brought from the holy ark of the ancient synagogue, the crucifix and chalice from the cathedral, and the golden horn from the mosque. When all is ready, rabbis, priests, mueddzins, dervishes and idol-prophets for the first time in religious experience unite to perform by their presence and assistance the Wedding of the Law to the anointed Messiah of the Lord. For days and days fasting and feasting, prayers and jollifications interchanged, and the report that the blessed Ben David had arrived at last spreads like wildfire to every point of the compass. "On to Jerusalem!" soon became the cry, and the mob moved towards the Holy Land, increasing as it proceeded onward. Means for subsistence were furnished almost exclusively by one infatuated millionaire, the Saraf Bashi (mint-master and wool contractor) of Cairo, a man with a wonderfully benevolent heart but a muddled brain that had been distorted and inflamed by the incessant study of the Kabbalah. This man, whose name was Raphael Joseph Chelebi, as soon as he learned of the doings in Salonichi, proceeded there at once with a caravan of camels loaded with untold treasures, and placed himself forthwith at the head of the march to the Holy City. The people, too, through whose lands the pilgrims pass have been informed in advance of the glad tidings by gaudily attired heralds, mounted on splendidly caparisoned chargers. They bring provisions and provide comforts, many of the inhabitants swelling the great

crowd moving eastward. At last the tumultuous hordes arrive in Jerusalem. Here, too, everything is prepared for their reception. Ignorance, poverty and religious frenzy ruled supreme at that period in the city of the Lord. Years of the most cruel oppression had made the denizens of that once favored seat of the Shechinah now a sink of superstition. Unlike the Crusaders who came as invaders and foes, the Messianic crowds were received with open arms as friends and deliverers. Sabbathai moved forth like a mighty potentate and prince, surrounded by a court of servile and devoted attendants. A fine palace was selected for his residence; obsequious honors were paid him every time when he showed himself in public. This occurred very seldom, as he wisely preferred the mystery of retirement. Even the foreign consuls and ambassadors, partly from curiosity, partly from some selfish motives, called to do him honor and then sent their exaggerated reports to their home governments. Only the Vizier of the Sultan, who was the ruler of the state, kept aloof and keenly watched the course of events. A new phase now occurred, which gave the already stirring affair new *éclat* and sham lustre.

Section IV.—The Affianced of the Messiah.

During one of the periodical outbreaks against the Hebrews, wherein generally numbers were slain and the congregations dispersed, it happened in a Polish city under rule of the inhuman general Chonienicke that a little girl-waif, orphaned by the massacre, was found by the Christians. They placed her with the nuns of a Carmelite cloister. She was about six years old then, and of her whole family none was left but an elder brother, who found refuge in Amsterdam, whence the boy had fled with

many others of these persecuted people. The foundling, bright and exceedingly handsome, was adopted by the sisters to be raised and educated in the Catholic faith. Her quaint, arch and affectionate ways made her the favorite of her foster-mothers, and in fact she ruled with her irresistible, cunning ways the whole pious household. She retained vividly the early impressions of her parental home, and nothing that the nuns could do made her forget these. So, often when reciting the "Ave" and "Paternoster," which they taught her to repeat morning, noon and eve, in the midst of her Latin words she would cry out her "Sh'mah Israel," and the little cheat never enjoyed a night's rest before she had said her accustomed Hebrew prayers. There was nothing left undone by her kind benefactors to give her a fair and thorough education, and she amazed her teachers by quick comprehension, great memory and insatiable thirst for learning. To this was added an eccentric and fantastical disposition that filled her with dreams and illusions. She grew into a rapturous, beautiful maiden, the very type of oriental comeliness. A tall and commanding stature, cream-colored complexion, with deep carmine waxen cheeks; rosy lips, large dark eyes with long fringed lashes and straight, full eyebrows; a high forehead encircled with short wavy curls which studded her well-rounded head like clusters of blue-black grapes; finely developed bust and form—such she appeared now, when sixteen, preparing to take the veil, which was to occur shortly. But it had not been willed so. One night she disappeared from the cloister. In the morning she was found by some of her co-religionists, a few of whom had returned to their former home, in the old Hebrew burial-place. She was dressed in her night gown only and lay prostrate on the grave of her

parents. She declared to the astonished people that in last night's sleep the spirit of her father had appeared to her and had carried her to this spot. Women were called and she showed them the bloody traces of finger-nails on her waist and arms. More remarkable still, she asserted that the spirit had proclaimed to her before he vanished, at dawn of light, these words: "Sarah, my daughter, thou art to be the spouse of the Messiah!" There was extreme danger to the Jews who thus had found her, to shelter a runaway from the convent, and yet they had it not in their hearts to deliver one of their own back into the hands of those who insisted upon her conversion and immurement. So they secretly and in disguise sent her to Amsterdam, delivering the girl to her glad brother. Here she lived in ease and comfort for one year, admired by all who saw her, but repulsing the many wooers for her hand, continually asserting that she could only become the wife of the "Ben David," and that in due time his messenger would come to lead her to the fulfilment of her heaven-propheesied destiny. Strange to say, just at the expiration of the year since her arrival at the Dutch capital, an ambassador from Sabbathai Zevi arrived, demanding for his lord and master the hand of the girl in marriage. He related that the Messiah had been informed in a nightly vision of the whereabouts of his future spouse, and had been commanded to have her conducted to Jerusalem for the marriage. The excitement caused by this event was immense among all classes of people.

She departed in company with her brother and without delay. Her journey resembled a triumphal tour. Everywhere she was received with princely honors. The inhabitants where she passed flocked in crowds to see the chosen bride of the Messiah. Thus she reached at last the gates of the Holy City.

Here she was met by a procession of the magnates and grandees of the place, inclusive of an outpouring of the citizens, a medley from all lands and quarters of the globe. Bands of musicians preceded them; a throne-chair had been provided, in which she was lifted and carried to the palace and the waiting groom, like a veritable queen. An arch of lotus and palms had been erected at the portal. Here sat Zevi surrounded by his bodyguard, awaiting the coming of his affianced. As she approached the stairs he rose and cried out, like one dazed, "Merris, my veritable Merris!" Impressing a kiss upon her forehead, he led her to the throne. A more imposing couple was never seen. The "Chacham Pashi" received them. That official was dressed in the full garb of the former high-priest—the mitre on his head, the golden breastplate suspended from his neck. Proclamation was made by him that the now-to-be-celebrated union was a spiritual consecration of the lives of the august pair, that the fulfilment of mankind's redemption must be achieved by a complete man in the welded nature of a perfect male and female, as prophesied by Holy Writ. Joining their hands together, placing iron rings in each of which was set a priceless solitaire diamond on the forefinger of both, and bestowing the Aaronic blessing with his outstretched arms over their heads, he pronounced them "husband and wife!" They now retired amidst the hosannahs and hallelujahs of the jubilant masses, and for three days the city was given over to feasting, dancing and carousing. No greater miracle could have been wrought in the eyes of the people than this wonderful coming of the bride and the union of two imperial souls, fitted as if by decree of Providence for the unprecedented delusion of the age and the continents.

The influence which now commenced to reveal

itself in the new life of this auspiciously connected pair became visible within a very short time. The man—grave, decorous, stern and commanding—upheld firmly his celestial claim. The woman—sprightly, engaging and unusually attractive—drew to him by her beauty and interesting ways hosts of admirers and devoted followers. She conquered as much with her smiles as he with his dignity and pretensions. They lived in separate apartments, each one occupying a wing of the palace, and never met except at the hour for public audiences. A confidential intercommunion was kept up between them by a third personage, a most trusted and important servant, Zevi's private secretary, the profoundly learned and piously devoted Samuel Primo. Never had mundane cause more faithful and apt manager—one who understood how to make the liveliest propaganda for the agitation, surrounding it with a sheen of dignity and glory and watching over his master and mistress like a guardian angel; providing for every contingency and prepared for all requirements. Imbued with an absolute belief in the genuine mission of Sabbathai and his spouse, he prized himself too happy to be permitted living in constant companionship with the chosen of heaven, and his unbounded enthusiasm inspired all who came in contact with them with an equal fervor, forming as it were a magic circle which widened and extended by every day's experience.

Fearing hostile interference from the Governor of Jerusalem, Emin Pasha, and believing it greatly advantageous to remove with his august patrons to new fields of glory, he planned and carried out in a most regal way a journey to Smyrna, the birthplace of the Messiah. A solid train of chariots, a long cavalcade of splendidly mounted men, and an endless caravan of camels, led by bands of music, inter-

spersed with fifes and drums, moved in gallant array westward. Amidst this brilliant procession rode the hero of the day and his spouse in palanquins draped with purple and gold, carried by docile, easy-moving elephants. They were surrounded by a gorgeously dressed bodyguard of two hundred men. Heralds, furnished with silver trumpets, preceded the procession and announced its coming for miles ahead. Such splendor had not been witnessed in the East since King Darius the Great moved from Macedonia. Everywhere the populace turned out, singing and praying, eager multitudes to behold the coming of the Lord. As the gold-tipped minaret spires of Smyrna came in sight, a spectacle met the comers which perhaps has no parallel in reality or fiction. Virtually the whole city had turned out to meet them. Men, women and children, the rich and the poor, the young and the old, had come in holiday parade. The municipal authorities carried between them the ancient father and the two older brothers of Zevi. The ministers of the several religions, dominant in these regions, followed next. As the two hosts met, the hosannahs and acclamations of frenzied joy rent the air. A grand jubilee memorial service was held here in the open field, and the ecstasy of the multitude was raised to the highest pitch. Towards evening the masses moved forward, to arrive in the brilliantly illuminated city at nightfall. Here the house of the Redeemer's nativity had been transformed into a magnificent palace, and the whole quarter changed to a metropolitan avenue which resembled more a palm grove and a flower garden than a street. It was wonderful what the hand of man had accomplished with skill and a profusion of wealth. That night there lived no prouder man in all the world than was Samuel Primo. Nor was there a more pitiful, abjectly miserable

wretch than the lion of the hour, the Messiah. He had fallen violently in love with his wife. That woman in her grave beauty and splendor, from the moment of her arrival had, with the keen sense of her extraordinary perception, looked through the pretender, recognized the sham and hollowness of the performances, and loathed and detested the man. In public and to all appearances she showed him divinest deference and profound respect, but on several trials of amative approach her repulse was full of venom and tiger-like hatred. Worst of all, the tender passion of her heart, like a shadow-begotten plant, will turn to daylight, so she was bent towards the faithful, humble Primo, a passion realized by no one but herself and her madly jealous husband. It was the realization of my old curse. This domestic calamity did not, however, interfere with the pompous progress of events.

After a few days of rest, recuperation and organization, the active work for the campaign of the coming reign of the "Ben David" commenced. The machinery of a high and imposing court was set into motion. Messengers with royal authority were sent to all parts of the civilized globe, announcing the arrival of the millennium; these were especially commissioned to the largest Jewish congregations in Europe. As if a mania had overpowered all reason, they were received with all tokens of credence, and the people everywhere went wild over the auspicious news. Men of the highest standing, of culture, learning and sagacity, were duped into the hallucination. Church and synagogue united to spread its extent. Trade and commerce came to a standstill. There was no longer credit; there were no debtors. The governments fell into the snare, and many high officials became as crazily enthusiastic over the portentous affair as the ignorant and easily gulled

people. The fact was that already highly colored and exaggerated reports had reached Europe by the ambassadors, consuls and commercial agents, which tended towards the general ensuing commotion. Everybody made ready for "The Day of Doom" and the early re-establishment of the Kingdom of God in Palestine. Foremost among the Hebrews were the communities of Amsterdam and Hamburg, who went frantic over the news. Jubilees with noisy music, dancing and frolics in the houses of prayer, castigations and fastings for the repentance of sins, were the uninterrupted order of the day. The printing presses worked day and night to publish the new messianic rituals, in which Sabbathai as "King David" graced the frontispiece. The public gyrating and performances of sedate, earnest and respectable people everywhere would under ordinary circumstances have made it appear as if the human mind had been dethroned and all had become maniacs. Under the new regime the old order of things was entirely reversed. The Talmudical and Mosaic laws were declared no longer in force. The strangest vagaries, the crazy teachings of the Kabbalah, took their place. Never before had the Anti-Messiah's efforts to destroy the Torah come so near its realization as just now, and this by the hands of its own guardians and protectors. What the Wandering Gentile could not achieve with fire, sword, tears, suffering, persecution and death, seemed now to come about by wile, delusion and superstition from within the very ranks of the faithful. At the seat of his residence in Smyrna things went on with equal success and ever-increasing fervor. From far and near came ambassadors without number and of all creeds to hail the newly-arisen star. Soon the "King of the Jews," as now ran his title, received recognition and acknowledgment of fealty

from crowned heads and potentates. Pilgrims whose hands were filled with treasures came from every quarter of the globe to worship the holy sovereign. It was reported that the representative of St. Peter in Rome had sent a special nuncio to declare the Holy Father's submission to his Eastern celestial peer.

On the first morning of the new year 1666 A. D., the auspicious date that should fulfill the beginning of the glad tidings, another remarkable scene was enacted publicly from the portals of the renowned palace. Upon a raised platform sat on their golden thrones the king and queen of the new heavenly-appointed realm. Before them were gathered the representatives of the nations, and the neighborhood was black with the various races of men. This day the subdivision of the spiritual rulers of the globe should be proclaimed to the world. Amidst the blare of the trumpets and the fanfares of the cornets sounding over the tumultuous uproar, went forth the august edicts. Besides his own supreme power over all the earth and his special claim over the Dragon of Turkey, who was to be subdued with song and music without the lifting of a sword, twenty-six faithful servants were appointed as his chief vice-regents over all the rest of mankind. The lion's share was given to his brothers Elias and Joseph. The first in his biblical namesake character was titled "the king of kings"; the next in same capacity as "King of Israel." Then came his faithful yet secretly hated secretary, Samuel Primo; friend Jachini, Raphael Joseph Chelibi of Cairo were not forgotten. Even a common Jew tramp and beggar, the lowliest man of Smyrna, Abraham Rubino, was endowed with one of the utopian crowns. None but offspring of the chosen people were named for the regal vacancies. All received titles of some royal biblical celebrity. For a wonder, neither Gentile nor

Christian took umbrage at this. Was it not the restoration of the ancient people of God? It became plausible that none but the seed of Abraham would have share directly in his glorious work.

With this fanatical act the movement had reached the acme of its glory. That self-same day the journey of conquest to Constantinople began. Prophecies of the miracles and achievements soon to happen were published in flaming placards to the faithful. The hour was foretold in which the anointed of the Lord should make his victorious entry into the city of the golden horn. The voyage had to be made by sea. An ample number of ships had been provided. The star-studded pennon of the Redeemer was hoisted over a royal craft. Every one who list might go, but by special command no weapon of any kind was allowed on board of the armada. The conquests to be achieved were those of peace and good-will. So they sailed as the Star of Bethlehem appeared in the sky. A terrific storm, however, arose in the Bosphorus and threw the vessels on a lonely spot bordering the Dardanelles.

The Sultan's government had been apprised of the revolutionary doings of Sabbathai Zevi and watched his proceedings with anxious attention. The Mendes colony in Constantinople held aloof from the popular infatuation, and keeping well informed of its progress, no doubt kept the authorities posted of what was going on. The Grand Vizier Achmed Kopreli, a sagacious, stern and determined man, was entrusted by the Scrail to watch over the enthusiasts and crush them if possible with one blow at the first opportunity. Knowing their coming by water, he had sent out a well-armed maritime expedition with orders to destroy the ships and to bring all who escaped drowning loaded with chains as captives into his presence. When therefore the storm-tossed ships from Smyrna

foundered, their passengers found themselves in the hands of the Turkish men-of-war, who had watched for them and here surprised the entire host. It was a sorry spectacle to see the proud, stalwart Messiah loaded with heavy irons, and many wept as he was led to the hold of the commander's ship to isolated imprisonment. Disenchanted Sarah was perhaps the most indifferent spectator. She had foreseen that something of this nature must ultimately happen to burst the over-inflated bubble. This strange-natured woman spent most of her time henceforth in consoling the almost despairing Primo. The captive Jews were landed first in a small suburb of the metropolis to give them a chance to celebrate their now approaching Sabbath. Next Sunday morning they were escorted by land to Constantinople. Here Zevi was publicly flagellated, and he cowardly owned to the examining magistrate, Mustapha Pasha, that he was none else but a travelling rabbi who had come from Jerusalem to gather alms. It was not his fault, he added, that the people made so much of him. He was sent after due process to the fortress of Abydos on the Dardanelles as a prisoner of state. His quasi-wife and secretary were permitted to accompany him. The rest of his still faithful followers were permitted to depart to their homes; but many lingered about awaiting some miraculous deliverance. Zevi was treated leniently and with an unwonted and unexpected generosity by the Sultan. In consequence the arrant traitor entered upon new schemes and machinations to revive his waning cause. He once more assumed the role of a Messiah. From all parts of the globe Jewish pilgrims came to see the captive lion, in whom they still had faith. All the misfortunes of his late experience were prophetically the necessary concomitants to his final mission. At the latest within two years this would be achieved

and the Kingdom of Israel in the Holy Land re-established in greater glory than ever before. Previous, however, the Torah and the Talmud must be totally abolished. Despite of this anomalous decree, the orthodox Hungarian and Polish Hebrews became his warmest adherents. These had long since dabbled in the mysteries of the Kabbalah, and lived now in such misery and misfortune under their cruel oppressions that anything which promised relief was acceptable for a hope of betterment. Among the fanatics a sect was established by the name of their leader—the Sabbatharians. They steadily increased in numbers and influence. The tumult abroad had either not ceased or was revived with renewed vigor by messengers and proclamations. A formal government and court was re-established at Abydos with connivance of the subservient castellan, whose eyes were blinded by golden gifts. The agitation in the larger continental cities continued with unabated fury, and this among all religious denominations. The news of the incarceration of the Ben David either had not reached them or was not believed. But the overstrung, artificial excitement under so unfavorable circumstances, with the hero in confinement, could not long remain a secret at the headquarters of the Sultan. When information reached him, a consultation took place between Mahomed IV., the Chief Mufti Wannî, and the court physician Didon, a Jewish proselyte to the Moslem faith. After long deliberation it was agreed to give the arch disturber of the peace choice between death and acceptance of the Islam. A messenger (Tschansch) with troops was sent to Abydos. He first dispersed the mob that had gathered here in immense numbers to do reverence to their idol; then they took the prisoner and departed with him to the capital. Now he was met by the court physician, informed of his

sentence and urged to abjure his faith. "If this is refused," the wily advocate of conversion added, "burning torches will be bound around thy body and then set afire; thou wilt be whipped through the streets until life is consumed." But it did not need these threats. The pseudo-Messiah had already made up his mind. How could the exultant, expectant world, and especially the deluded Hebrews, be made now more chagrined, disorganized and shamed than if their boasted Redeemer in sight of all the people submitted to the demand of the Sultan and became pusillanimously a convert to Allah and his Prophet? Consternation and chaos would overtake civilization, reform and learning. A greater blow could not well be dealt to them all. So it was not hard for me, the Ben Beor, to decide what to choose. My resolution being made known, the Chief Mufti waived all preliminaries, and the ceremony of conversion was publicly and with great pomp and display performed at the principal mosque of the capital. The great Ben David had become a little dervish of the Moslem faith.

Sarah and Primo were present at the humiliating spectacle. The woman was not surprised at the craven action of the would-be Messiah. She had looked him so through and through, was so fully convinced of his cowardice and villainy, that the farce here performed was to her but a fit climax to the comedy which had preceded. Primo, however, was livid with rage. His faith and trust in the chosen of the Lord had remained firm to the last. He was convinced that at the final moment even, his master would raise his right hand and, by bringing down the wrath of heaven, smite the captors and revilers from head to foot. But as Zevi permitted himself like a patient lamb to be led to the golden crescent, as he himself threw down the crown from his head and

with his own hand changed it for the white turban of the infidels, Primo swooned away and had to be carried out of the holy place. By Sarah's direction he was taken to the Mendes colony. Here under her tender care the nearly heartbroken man soon revived. Thus far he had withstood all blandishments and seductive graces of the woman, now his nurse. His great reverence and awe for his former master did not permit him to raise his eyes in longing even to the sacred wife. He knew that she disloyally had placed herself repeatedly in his way with such tokens of affection as could not be well misinterpreted. He was aware that there was but the coldest and most formal relation between the strange pair, but he had steeled his heart like unto flint against harboring the faintest feelings of treason against the august person of the Messiah. Now that the veil was lifted and the base idol was shattered, he no longer resisted the long suppressed, passionate inclinations of his affections. It was no hard wooing and winning. The two, who seemed to be made for one another, were shortly after married, stayed at the colony in contented retirement, and a happier pair was not known to live among the here prosperous Israelites.

The ridiculous Messianic denouement and catastrophe was indeed a great shock to the disenchanting nations and people. For some time there were thousands who would not believe the humiliating reports. They asserted that these were the malignant work of revilers and slanderers. But the truth had to be accepted at last. While the recoil was like a stab in the heart of the faithful, yet, the first convulsive pang over, cool judgment and sagacious measures everywhere brought order out of chaos, and the damage wrought, though great, was neither fatal nor lasting. Wise and conciliatory measures were adopted

by the secular authorities. The clergy everywhere united to efface as much as possible the memory of the delusion, and the rabbins ordained that excommunication should be pronounced against any one who taunted or reviled a former adherent to the folly. Within a decade, Time, with her all-healing hand, had spread her soothing shadows over the scars left by the wound civilization had received in this wild eruption, and soon thereafter it was remembered only as an inexplicable vagary of history. The Torah, the law of God and Moses, survived unscathed to live, to save and to enlighten. Only in the dark and superstitious hamlets and villages of benighted Hungary and Poland the Sabbatharian sects vegetated and groped in a blind existence for years and years to come.

And what of the false Messiah? When the first excitement of his conversion was over, all reports to the contrary, he disappeared from the scene of his late exploit. Several pretenders tried in and by his name to renew some scheme to excite their contemporaries with revived reports of the Redeemer being on hand, and that he was to arise now from the golden-horned minarets of the prophet Mahomet. But the real Anti-Messiah, the genuine Wandering Gentile, disappeared from here in order to continue his unceasing work of malediction against Enlightenment, Right, Truth and Liberty in other zones and climes.

PHANTASMAGORIA XXII.

THE CLIMAX : FREEDOM TRIUMPHANT.

Section I.—A Résumé.

It must not be believed that the hateful utterances of so illustrious a man as old Martin Luther passed without serious results to the Hebrews. It stirred anew spasmodic ebullitions of cruel outrages over the fatherland, for which the great Reformer became responsible. Nor was now the presence of the Anti-Messiah required to start ugly passions into active operation. The clannishness, ignorance and bigoted notions of the medieval all-prevailing Trades-Unions (Zuenfte) were as eager to commit acts of violence as any other agency possibly could be. Notable instances of their inhuman performances were the expulsion of the Jews from the free city of Frankfurt-on-the-Main in the year 1614, under the leadership of a notorious master-baker, Vincennes Fatmilk, and a similar extensive one in the city of Worms, under the auspices of a petty lawyer named Doctor Chemnitz, both agitating about the same time. There is no necessity of relating the details of such occurrences enacted by the scum of the German people. They all resemble one another in cruelty and wanton destruction. The fact must, however, be noted, which became prominent among the lawless uproar, that the better classes of society did not now look on with indifference, but in many instances commiserated and helped the hunted victims. The authorities, imperial as well as municipal, interceded with the strong arm of the law, and visited the offenders with heavy fines or capital punishment. Order was thereby to some extent restored. All these circumstances could not prevail on me to

tarry on these grounds, no matter how necessary my presence might be for the suppression of religious and political progress. Too long had I stayed in the Orient with that futile escapade of the Sabbathai Zevi affair. My presence was cryingly demanded in more northern regions of the Western Continent. I had carelessly neglected to look after the headlong march of civilization on the Albion Islands. Thither I hied now with all possible speed. A résumé of the affairs there will explain the danger to my cause in this region.

The British populace has ever been difficult to manage. They are a sturdy and aggressive people. When scarcely emerging from the state of semi-barbarism they had, as early as 1215 A. D., wrested from their tyrant king John, called Lackland, the foundation of national liberty, the peerless Magna Charta, with its supreme provision for personal freedom, culminating in the famous writ of "habeas corpus." They had during the Middle Ages, despite of all internal dissensions between the clans and tribes and the continual external wars, created and maintained the supreme right to representation in the law-making and taxing powers of the two houses of Parliament. From their midst had sprung during these often turbulent periods the grandest results in art, science, philosophy and literature. England stands out as the first nation for whom was made a translation of the Bible in the vernacular, under James I., 1616. This was only possible by the successful introduction of the art of printing as early as 1474. Although they had, in conformity with the ruling prejudices of the age, persecuted and expelled the Jews from the entire dominion in the year 1290 under Edward I., yet thanks to the efforts of the great Rabbi Menasseh ben Israel, who came over from Amsterdam in 1655

and pleaded in their behalf, by the progress of civilization, they were for the first time after these many years legally permitted to return and find an asylum with nearly full rights of citizenship. Except in the conquered and ever-maltreated Ireland, the Church of Rome had never any great supremacy among the Anglo-Saxons and Scots, and her power was overthrown entirely almost contemporaneously with the Reformer Martin Luther in Germany. This occurred during the reign of Henry VIII., about the year 1532.

What elsewhere was the work of the people, emanated in Great Britain from the throne and the nobility. Two women were at the bottom of the whole movement. The profligate king had married his deceased brother's wife, Catherine, a daughter of the Spanish monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella. He soon tired of her and fell in love with the beautiful Anne Boleyn. Religious scruples were the pretext for asking Pope Clement VII. to grant a divorce from Catherine. This being promptly refused and a marriage with Anne forbidden, the enamored king defied the Holy Father, had his creatures, under the first Protestant Archbishop Cranmer, pronounce the hated matrimonial alliance annulled and the marriage with Boleyn sanctioned. But the Pope remained firm. The unscrupulous king out of revenge convened Parliament. This, to please their monarch, subserviently annulled the papal authority over the British Islands and declared the English royal majesty to be henceforth the head of the Church. They thus joined the forces of the German Reformation. But it was in form only. For the schism on the island resembled the power of Rome, with the only difference that the King at home exercised exactly the power of the Pope abroad. From the start it could be seen that this religious disruption was paramount to a political

revolution also. It became patent that this organic movement, which took place with such violent and turbulent consequences, became the centre of rebellion, which must spread abroad until, sooner or later, the old theory of government with the right of the king to rule by divine origin was destroyed or modified in every civilized state of the world.

As if by providential interposition, the haughty Spaniard, under the monstrous tyrant Philip II., should find his downfall in the gigantic effort to crush by his navy, fancied all-powerful, called the "Armada," his rival and hated foe, the matchless heroine Elizabeth. The intent to restore Catholicism on the English throne was foiled by a raging storm in the Channel. The thirst for revenge, because the British queen had refused Philip's offer of marriage, remained unappeased by the courage of the brave captain Lord Howard of Effingham and his gallant sailors. And the wrath of fate was visited upon the ill-advised and malconducted maritime expedition, when the bulky, unmanageable caravals of Spain found their graves amidst the reefs and shoals of Scotland and Ireland. Eternal justice executed here the sentence of compensation upon doomed Spain, levelling her might and power, never to rise again, against outraged humanity. Henceforth "Britannia ruled as the mistress of the sea." Such was the record of 1588.

Ponderous events followed sharply in the now united three kingdoms, culminating in the overwhelming episode which transpired not more than fifty years after the great Elizabethan reign, under her second successor Charles I. The struggle of this despotic and overbearing king with Parliament—an arbitrary sovereign against his liberty-loving people, led the monarch ultimately to the executioner's block, crushing with his downfall and death

the monarchy, and raising the republic with the supremely strong and noble Oliver Cromwell at the head of the newly established commonwealth. But that the people here, as elsewhere, proved to be too unripe for self-government; but that their frenzied sectarian strifes divided and disunited their omnipotent strength, all would have been over with the thrones and monarchs, and universal democracy might have taken the place of the political government. As it was, the republic proved an ephemeral episode, like a lightning flash in the dark history of despotism. The death of Charles and the audacity of the Protector Cromwell were avenged by the restoration of the throne with a new king, accompanied by the cruel consequences of a restored royalty. In this, historical events passed for a long time.

All was not lost yet for Ben Beor, the Anti-Messiah, as he landed on the shores of Albion shortly after George III. had ascended the British throne in 1760. Truly affairs looked squally and boisterous, but the most threatening clouds came from across the ocean. There a new world had arisen. Christopher Columbus had primarily discovered it. After sailing out with his three insignificant caravals on that momentous third day of August, 1492, and after twice repeating his successful voyages of discovery, he had given to the world and to his sovereigns a new continent, glorious America. Perfidious Ferdinand and Isabella on his third return loaded him with chains of a common felon. He sank into his grave heartbroken by the base ingratitude of his royal patrons and the world at large. Not even his ashes were permitted to find a resting place either in his native Genoa or in the soil of his adopted country; but after being carried from one place to another in Spain, they were at last shipped to St. Domingo and then to Havana, there across the ocean

to find a last resting place. While even deprived the honor of having the country of his discovery known by his name, Americus Vesputio snatching that privilege from him, yet in the annals of humanity there is no brighter and more glorious record than that left behind him for time and ages. The ingrate Ferdinand could not refuse to erect a marble statue to his memory and inscribe thereon: "A Castilla y a Leona nuevo mundo dio colon." (To Castile and Leon, Columbus gave a new world.)

Spain remained, however, not long in exclusive possession of the newly acquired territory. France, Portugal, Holland, and especially England, sent their bold mariners across the ocean, there to discover new lands, plant colonies and introduce in them European vices, cruelties, intolerance and bloody scenes of the home countries. The natives, whom they called Indians, were mostly hospitable and brave tribes. Some of these, especially the Aztecs, vied in refinement and civilization with their lately arrived invaders; yet they were maltreated, plundered and goaded into bloody warfare, and many were utterly exterminated. The rough adventurers who came here first were, however, soon superseded by a different class of people. As the news spread abroad of the extensive, fertile and beautiful hemisphere across the Atlantic, the oppressed and persecuted of all lands flocked thither to find liberty of conscience and new homes. A large number of Huguenots from France took ships for the southern portion of Middle America and settled in the States called South and North Carolina, Florida and Louisiana. They brought with them their French habits, education and refinement, and flourished soon in all their colonies. The hunted Puritans of England and adjoining countries fled Westward also, and, after successfully crossing the ocean, inhabited the more northern

regions. Their colonies, too, after many hardships and struggles, became extensive and prosperous, maintaining and perpetuating the distinctive characteristics of their nativities. These settlements growing into majestic proportions, remained nominally under rule and control of the Old World. But governments from abroad for these distant lands meant nothing except devastating wars between rival monarchies, carried on here at the woful expense of the settlers; the sending of the most arrogant and objectionable aristocrats representing the far-away thrones; the exacting of oppressive taxes and the harassing troubles heaped upon trade, commerce and the development of natural resources. These galling objections had made themselves bitterly felt of late in the wide extent of the British possessions, ranging now from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico. Nothing but the iron hand of veriest despotism could keep the distant subjects much longer in subjection. At this juncture I entered upon the auspicious scene.

Information had reached London of great discontent and even lawless acts by the several Trans-Atlantic settlers against the policy of the home government. The newly incoming administration was resolved upon stringent measures to keep the colonies in strict subjection. The peculiar character of the new king fitted him exactly for carrying out this despotic policy. Up to the time of his ascending the throne, he had resided with his mother, the Princess Dowager of Wales. George II. had cherished a deep antipathy for that lady, and this feeling was cordially reciprocated by her. By these circumstances the future heir to the realm was excluded from the court of his grandfather, which brought the calamity of the neglect for his proper education. Secluded thus, the young Crown Prince was left comparatively ignorant of the kingdom's political

condition; and in general he had little familiarity with those questions which should form the supreme issues as soon as he became the sovereign of the mighty kingdom. In addition to this, his disposition was arbitrary and crafty, and the methods which he adopted, recalled those which brought about the downfall of the Stuarts. The fact is everywhere apparent that an hereditary taint of insanity manifested itself early in his career, growing finally to complete madness. With such a person at the head of affairs it was not impossible to hurl, by acts of violence, proud England, with her love for freedom and independence, into the vortex of destruction and regain the mastery of the old absolute power of the Throne and the Church. True, these things must be brought about by cunning, wile and mischievous stratagem; but these were the very essence of my destructive, scheming nature, and so I set to work to get my hands into the well-planned work. I found, however, great obstacles with the ministry which just then guided the affairs of the state.

William Pitt, a man of immense brain, firmness of character and almost prophetic foresight, held the helm in the Department of War, and from there, at the zenith of his influence, resisted the wishes and ambitions of the King. His Majesty was from the beginning of his reign possessed with the wild notion that the royal prerogative had declined in dignity and extent of power since the Cromwell revolution; that it was now little more than an empty name, and that it was his special mission and duty to become an absolute sovereign by divine grace. Inspired by such a hazardous idea, he forced his great minister to resign office in October, 1761. With this to me fortunate event there went also in retirement a person whose innate shrinking and timid nature alone has kept his name in oblivion, contemporaneous

history omitting it entirely from her records, being too much engaged, as is her wont, in perpetuating the follies and guiles of puerile, despotic dynasties, arrogant courtiers and both their shameful lusts and amative intrigues. The character, so ignominiously slighted, was a certain Perez Mendes, a direct offspring from the remarkable Jew colony in Constantinople. When a youth he had received, under care of his illustrious Turkish relatives, the highest educational advantages, both spiritual and secular, and was sent to the University of Bologna, then the foremost seat of learning in Europe. After acquiring with distinguished honors the title of Doctor and Rabbi, he went on an extensive tour of continental travels, which brought him to London. Here, by reason of his great learning, notwithstanding an innate and morbid modesty, he found himself soon within a circle of the foremost savants, becoming a special favorite with the then celebrated and influential Sam Jonson, who introduced the young man to the prime minister Pitt. This great statesman, with his keen knowledge of human character, took a strong liking for the Jew and appointed him as his private secretary. In this capacity the whole work of state passed through his hands. The world will never know what share such subordinate servants had and have in the lustrous fame of their superiors. Happy is certainly the great commander who wins trusted and capable lieutenants to comprehend his plans and carry out successfully the details of the master's conceptions. Such a person was Mendes. In the midst of his never-ceasing occupation he yet found time to woo and win the hand and heart of a most estimable lady, who, alas! at the birth of their daughter Judith, made the husband a disconsolate widower and the infant a motherless orphan. Mendes idolized the child. She grew up to maidenhood.

He bestowed all his devotion and learning on the education of the girl, who developed soon into a tenderly affectionate daughter, beautiful in countenance and a mind bright far beyond her years. She was now fourteen years old and just budding into womanhood, when I, Ben Beor, for the first time visited their home by invitation of the father, with whom I had become personally acquainted and soon had established intimate relations. At the sight of the girl I was perfectly staggered. She was an identical copy in feature and form of that ideal woman whose vision had haunted me through all the ages—a reproduced Merris, the queenly daughter of Pharaoh. At once brilliant and profound, she evinced such piety, devotion and religious trust of an ethereal, poetical nature as to surround her almost with a halo of angelic sanctity. She had never mingled much with the world, and her innocence and artlessness were really refreshing in comparison with the bold and painted creatures who filled the courts and the aristocratic households among whom I had mingled of late. When the father acquainted the child of the dismissal of the ministry and his own lost situation, it was wonderful to see how her kind, loving words and fond caresses filled the man with consolation and resignation.

Sir John Granville now came into power as the head of the ministry. He proved a submissive tool in the hands of the king, with little force of character, of ordinary capacity only, naturally indolent and inert, leaving most of the work of his great office to his subordinates. By high recommendation to His Majesty and the new minister I had been chosen as successor to Mendes, in consequence of which I became acquainted and then intimately associated with this remarkable person, my predecessor, with whom I thenceforth kept up continual social rela-

tions. Frequently present at interviews between George III. and Granville, I had in several instances audaciously permitted myself to strongly favor the opinions of the king against the mild objections of the minister, and was rewarded for this by the royal smiles and frequent appeals to my opinion in their controversies. It all concerned the policy to be adopted and enforced in the American colonies. I soon found the sovereign the very person to bring about a conflict with the interoceanic possessions. He certainly was one of the worst monarchs to fill the throne in the pending crisis. His notion of government was altogether despotic. Stubborn, stupid and thick-headed, the principles of human rights as modern civilization had developed were entirely wanting in him. He could not conceive a magnanimous project, nor had he force of character sufficient to carry out his evil ones. With such a king and over-subservient ministry, it was not likely that the descendants of the Puritan Pilgrims and Huguenots would get on smoothly.

Section II.—The Coming Crisis.

Oppressive measures for the Americans were the pet schemes of the British crown. The half-demented king prevailed upon his minister, and he upon parliament, which plunged headlong into this course. A number of acts destructive of colonial liberty were readily passed. The first of these was the Importation Act. It had existed since 1733, but was evaded by the merchants. By its terms heavy taxes were laid on sugar, molasses and rum when imported. It further provided that no iron works should be erected abroad; the manufacture of steel was especially forbidden. Thus far these statutes were dead letters, disregarded and denounced

by the people across the Atlantic as unjust and obnoxious. In 1761, with the new incoming Granville ministry a strenuous effort was made to enforce the hated laws. The courts in America were authorized to issue to the King's officers search-warrants, called "writs of assistance." Armed with these, any petty constable might enter wherever he list, searching for and seizing goods suspected of having evaded the duty. In 1763 the officers of the admiralty were authorized to seize and confiscate all vessels engaged in the unlawful trade.

A great number of merchantmen having cargoes of sugar and wine were thus attached. The colonial trade with the West Indies was nearly destroyed. All remonstrance from the oppressed was in vain. Next year, in 1764, a far more oppressive measure, galling to the very brink of revolt, was passed by Parliament. By direct command from His Majesty, which I, as private secretary of the ministry of foreign affairs, brought to the House on the 10th day of March, a resolution was adopted by the Commons that it would be proper to charge certain "stamp duties" on all public documents emanating from the dependencies. It was announced that a bill embodying the principles would be prepared by the ministry and be presented at the next session of Parliament. The framing of this law became my task. The news of this proposed measure reached America and caused there universal excitement and indignation. Political meetings became the order of the day. Orators of unusual force stirred the masses to fever heat. The newspapers, already great engines for forming public opinion, teemed with rousing arguments against the proposed bill. Resolutions were passed by the people of almost every town. Formal remonstrances were addressed to the King and to Parliament. Agents were sent

to London in hope of preventing the passage of the act.

Early in March, 1765, the Stamp Act was passed. In the House of Commons it received a majority of five to one. In the House of Lords the vote was unanimous. Here is the text of the act as submitted and legalized :

THE STAMP ACT.

“ *Whereas*, By an act made in the last session of Parliament several duties were granted, continued and appropriated towards defraying the expenses of defending, protecting and securing the British Colonies and Plantations in America ; and whereas it is of first necessity that provision be made for raising revenue within your Majesty’s dominions in America, towards defraying the said expenses, we, your Majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled, have therefore resolved to give and grant unto your Majesty the several rights and duties hereinafter mentioned, and do most humbly beseech your Majesty that it may be enacted, and be it enacted by the King’s Most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that from and after the 1st day of November, 1765, there shall be raised, levied, collected and paid unto his Majesty, his heirs and successors, throughout the Colonies and Plantations in America, which now are or hereafter may be under the dominion of his Majesty, his heirs and successors.

“1st. For every skin of vellum or parchment or sheet of paper on which shall be engrossed, written or printed any declaration, plea, replication, rejoinder, demurrer, or other pleading, or any copy thereof,

in any court of law within the British Colonies and Plantations in America, a stamp duty of three pence. [Here follow fifty-three other provisions of stamp duties on all kinds of writings, documents, playing cards, dice, newspapers and pamphlets, almanacs and contracts.]

“55. Finally, the produce of all the aforementioned duties shall be paid into his Majesty’s treasury, and there be held in reserve, to be used from time to time by the Parliament for the purpose of defraying the expenses necessary for the defense, protection and security of the said Colonies and Plantations.”

The news of the hateful thing swept over America like the bursting of a storm-cloud. Crowds of excited men surged into the towns. Acts of violence were committed. The muffled bells of Philadelphia and Boston, the two chief cities, rang funeral peals, and people everywhere declared it was the death-knell of liberty. In the metropolis, New York, a copy of the act was carried through the streets with a death’s-head nailed to it and a placard bearing the inscription: “The Folly of England and the Ruin of America!”

In the Virginia House of Burgesses, the oldest and most powerful representative body of the land, there occurred a memorable scene. Patrick Henry, the youngest member of the house, a true scion of Irish stock, an uneducated mountaineer, only recently chosen to a seat in the provincial legislature, after waiting in vain for some older delegate to lead in opposition to Parliament, in his passionate way at length snatched a blank leaf out of an old law-book, hastily drew up a series of resolutions declaring that the Virginians were Englishmen with English rights; that the people of Great Britain had the exclusive privilege and right of voting their own taxes, and so had the Americans! That the colonies

were not bound to yield obedience to any law imposing taxation on them, and whosoever said to the contrary was an enemy to the country. The resolutions were at once laid before the house.

A violent debate ensued in which the patriots had the best of the argument. It was a moment of intense interest. One man of most remarkable character, who was to play great parts in future history, was in the body. George Washington occupied a seat as one of the delegates; he was as yet a young statesman. The eloquent and audacious Patrick Henry bore down all opposition. "Tarquin and Cæsar had each his Brutus!" exclaimed the indignant orator; "Charles I. had his Cromwell, and George III."—"Treason!" shouted the Speaker. "Treason—treason!" exclaimed the terrified loyalists, springing to their feet. "And George III. may profit by their example," continued Henry. Then he added, as he took his seat: "If this be treason, make the most of it!" The resolutions were put to the house and carried. Similar ones were adopted by the assembly in New York and Massachusetts. At Boston a certain James Otis successfully agitated the question of an American Congress. It was proposed that each colony, acting without the leave of the king, should appoint delegates to meet in the following autumn for the purpose of discussing the affairs of the nation. The proposition was favorably received and nine of the colonies appointed delegates. On the seventh day of October the first colonial congress assembled in New York. There were 28 representatives. Timothy Ruggles of Massachusetts was chosen president. After much discussion a Declaration of Rights was adopted, setting forth in unmistakable terms that the colonists as Englishmen could not and would not consent to be taxed without representation.

On the 1st day of November the Stamp Act was to take effect. During the summer great quantities of the stamped paper had been forwarded to America, but everywhere it was rejected, destroyed or sent back, and the day appointed for its introduction was kept as a national fast and mourning. At first legal business was suspended. The court-houses were shut up. Not even a marriage license could be obtained. By-and-bye, however, the offices were opened and business went on as usual, but no stamped paper was used. A new and most powerful society, "The Sons of Liberty," sprang into existence at this time. The merchants of the principal cities entered into a compact to purchase no more goods of Great Britain until the Stamp Act was repealed.

All these portentous events were reported in detail by the first mail-packet to the home government. They made a profound sensation. The colonists had many and staunch friends in England. Eminent statesmen espoused their cause. In the House of Commons, Mr. Pitt, almost in the throes of death, delivered a most powerful address on the relation of the Mother-country to the Colonies. The government was especially and fiercely scathed for having sent out troops to force by bayonets what could not be obtained by good-will. There was no help for it; the Stamp Act had to be formally repealed! It was so ordered and done on the 18th of March, 1766. A resolution, however, was added to this that Parliament had the right to bind the Colonies in all cases whatsoever.

The repeal of this odious Stamp Act produced great joy in America as well as at home. A few months later a new cabinet was formed under the leadership of Pitt. The poor man, however, was now too sick to attend to any state business. The King had not the courage to take the initiative for

any new measure of oppression. So I was selected to influence by wile and guile some party in the ministry of coming to the front. Lord Townshend, a bold and ambitious member of that body, was too ready to bring forward a new scheme for taxing the Americans. On the 29th of June, 1767, another act was passed imposing a duty on all glass, paper, painters' colors, and especially Tea imported by the colonies. Its text was as follows:—

THE TEA-TAX.

“An act granting certain duties in the British Colonies and Plantations in America; for allowing a drawback to the duties of customs upon the exportation from the kingdom of coffee and cocoanuts of the produce of the said Colonies or Plantations; for the discontinuing the drawback payable on china earthenware exported to America; and for more effectually preventing the clandestine running of goods in the said Colonies and Plantations.

“*Whereas*, it is expedient that a revenue should be raised in your Majesty's dominions in America, for making a more certain and adequate provision for defraying the charge of the administration of justice and the supporting civil government in such provinces where it shall be found necessary; and to more further defraying the expenses of defending, protecting and securing the said Colonies: We, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled, have therefore ordered to give and grant unto your Majesty the several rates and duties herein mentioned, and do most humbly beseech your Majesty that it may be enacted, and be it enacted by the King's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords spiritual and

temporal and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that from and after the twentieth day of November, 1767, there shall be raised, levied, collected and paid unto his Majesty, his heirs and successors, for and upon the respective goods hereinafter mentioned, which shall be imported from Great Britain unto any Colony or Plantation in America which now is or hereafter may be under the dominion of his Majesty, his heirs or successors, the several rates and duties following, that is to say :

“For every pound weight avoirdupois of tea, three pence.”

The act begins by taxing glass, red lead, white lead and painters' colors ; then comes the tax on tea, and that is followed by a tax on paper of all kinds ; next a number of provisions for the enforcement of the act such as are used in customs acts.

If the Stamp Act had produced a storm, this measure brought forth a tornado across the ocean. Another agreement not to purchase English goods was entered into by the Trans-Atlantic merchants. The newspapers teemed with denunciations against Parliament. Early in 1768 the Assembly in Massachusetts adopted a circular calling upon the other colonies for assistance in the effort to obtain redress of grievances. In the month of June, a sloop charged with evading payment of duty was seized by the custom-house officers of Boston. Hereupon the people attacked these officers and obliged them to flee from their houses to Castle William in the port of the bay. Seven hundred troops under General Gage, brought from Canada, marched into the rebellious city. Criminations and recriminations passed now everywhere between the people and the government officials.

Parliament now tried a trick. It removed all

taxes except on tea, and lowered the price of this to such an extent as to hope the impost would readily be paid. But the Americans looked through the sham and pledged themselves not to use any more tea until the tax should be removed. This happened in 1773. Ships were loaded with tea for the American market. Some of these reached Charleston, S. C., but here the chests were stored in damp cellars and the contents ruined. At New York and Philadelphia the vessels were not permitted to enter the harbors. At Boston the authorities would not allow the tea to be landed. On the 16th of December there was a great town-meeting at which seven thousand people were present. Samuel Adams and Josiah Quincy, two of the most popular orators, spoke to the multitude. Evening came and the meeting was about to adjourn, when a war-whoop, as the Indians use, was heard, and fifty men, disguised as Mohawks, marched to the wharf where the ships lay at anchor. The vessels were boarded by these masqueraders and three hundred and forty chests of tea were emptied into the bay. This is known as the "Boston Tea Party."

The crisis had come. These outrages must be suppressed. These rebels must be punished; the supremacy of the parliamentary laws maintained; the sovereign power of the home government firmly established, or the colonial possessions of Great Britain must be given up as lost. The tocsin of war is already in the air. Now or never is the time to re-establish the supreme sovereignty of the King as by divine right at home and abroad!

Section III.—Westward Ho!

While private secretary to Mr. Pitt, Perez Mendes had become fully acquainted with the turbulent

affairs which then prevailed in America. A great deal of correspondence concerning matters there passed through his hands. He had grown into an enthusiastic admirer of the far-away lands, everywhere described as boundless and beautiful, and in the people he recognized a race destined to play a grand and noble part in future history. The disabilities under which the still prejudiced Hebrews labored, even in liberal England, caused him to determine to emigrate across the ocean. Since his retirement from office he had been unable to find other congenial employment; and when now every day brought news of the mighty rising of the colonies, he, with prophetic enthusiasm kindled by the burning eloquence of his master now in Parliament, foresaw the results which a war of Great Britain with America must ultimately bring. He declared to me repeatedly, when the crisis came at last, that those people could not be conquered; that, fighting on their own soil for their homes and firesides, they in the end would surely throw off the yoke of the mother-country and would succeed in establishing their independence as a new and most glorious nation. At this juncture there came to him by the influence of his admiring Jewish friends, who knew his profound theological learning, a call to become Rabbi of a good and wealthy congregation in New York. His mind was made up—he would go! To young, beautiful, romance-loving Judith, his daughter, the prospective journey on the ocean and a home in the new world, where honors and distinction awaited her fondly-loved father, was like the fulfillment of a dream in fairyland. By kindness of the again-powerful Mr. Pitt, passage was secured for them on the *Challenger*, one of the best and most commodious men-of-war of the British navy. So all was gotten ready and prepared for their early depar-

ture. This was settled to take place about the beginning of April, 1776. Meanwhile I became impressed with the thought also that my presence in the turbulent states might become of great usefulness to the government; that from observations made on the spot I might be instrumental in foiling the success of the audacious rebels, and with the touch of my tyrannous hand throttle the young, contumacious liberty. Lie to myself as I would, deep down in the recesses of my heart there were other motives which bore this irresistible anxiety for accompanying my new-found friends to America. An inexplicable attachment drew me into hitherto unknown sympathy to this grand, noble Jew; and the pure, unselfish feeling, such as had been a stranger to my mind in the long career of my blasted wanderings, for his daughter had taken possession of my very nature. I could not bear to be separated from them. And yet, what a contrast there was between the character of these people and mine! They, all goodness, humanity, loveliness, piety and resignation in the will of Almighty God; I, all malignity, hatred, gross desires; panting for doing mischief, wrong and crime. They, completely happy as far as man can be, ever hopeful, ever content, overflowing with human kindness and love; I, the most miserable wretch, despairing, restless, cruel and forever cursing and cursed. Is it not perhaps this very opposition in our nature that draws me now so feverishly longing to them?

When I broached the plan to my employer, of going to America in the secret service of the government, he approved of it at once and with very great avidity. In the light which I presented my scheme and works he readily saw what great importance a man might prove who, situated as I would be, could operate in the dark, without being suspected, for the interests of the home-government. So every facility was

given me to be ready for departure when the Challenger would sail. There was great and hearty rejoicing when my friends learned I was to be their company for the sea-voyage. Although it came quite unexpected and as a surprise, they had grown to me also attached and were really glad that we were not to be separated. Never suspecting, even in the remotest degree, my real motives, the plausible explanations which I gave for my journey with them were all satisfactory. A month at least must transpire before the ship could be made ready for her errand; so we each had sufficient time to attend to our preparatory business.

Section IV.—A Great Conclave.

Messengers were at once dispatched by me to every part of Europe for the immediate assembling in London of my chief agents and subordinates. Within a few days before I sailed they were all present at the appointed hour and place.

In one of the suburbs of London, distant from any frequented road, hidden away amidst bush and heather, there stood an old abbey, fallen into decay and covered with moss and lichens. At the beginning of the Reformation it had been confiscated by the government. The Dominican brotherhood was dispersed, and the place which heretofore rang with the bells for prayer and trodden by the pious but ever-scheming monks, was used now for the storage of plunder of all sorts. At first a keeper was lodged here, but when the place became uninhabitable the authorities did not care to pay out any funds for repair. The ruins, very picturesque in outside appearance, offered no longer shelter from rain and sun and were entirely abandoned. The last keeper died unattended and alone, and his body

was found several days after his demise. A huge rusty lock was placed at the gate, and as the cloister stood in very bad repute of being haunted, no one cared even in daytime, much less in the night, to invade the gloomy premises. In my regular daily wanderings I had some time before strayed into this neighborhood. Curious to take a look at the inside of the cloister, I found no difficulty in removing the lock, entering after a troublesome passage through the brambles and briars into the interior. It was a veritable home for bats and owls, who had chosen the halls and dormitories for colonies of their nests. On reaching the chapel, in spite of the chaotic debris which had accumulated here and the almost unbearable musty odor that prevailed, I tarried and commenced, through sheer whim of idleness, to sound the floor by pounding with my heavy cane at such places as I knew from former experiences with the habits of the monks might reveal the whereabouts of the entrance to some subterranean chamber. Nor was I mistaken in this my surmise. I had reached the spot where formerly steps must have led to the altar. Here I was rewarded by hearing the peculiar hollow sound which revealed that there was a trapdoor. Marking the place carefully, I returned next day with the necessary tools and commenced the difficult labor of prying open the heavy oaken covering which, even after these many years of decay and ruin, proved as sound and firm as on the day when it was laid. At last my efforts succeeded. The trapdoor was removed and the opening revealed broad stairs of stone leading downwards as if into the very bowels of the earth. A rush of damp air came up from the darkness. Being without torch or light, I deemed it best to return next day provided with these; meanwhile allowing the hidden recesses to purify through the now uncovered orifice. Next day I

continued my ghostly exploration. To my surprise, I found immense, well-preserved chambers rudely furnished. The floors were covered with dry white sand. Implements of all kinds lay strewn around promiscuously. A smelting oven, standing in the center of the great hall, revealed to me the fact that not too long since the place must have been used as the abode of counterfeiters or highwaymen. A huge ingot of gold stood in the furnace, while all kinds of treasures, costly curiosities, pearls, rubies and diamonds lay in little heaps on the long table as if ready for distribution. The place looked like a scene where a fierce combat had taken place. The floor was literally covered with human skeletons in all positions and attitudes. The rats, which swarmed here in droves, had gnawed the bodies to the very bones, which lay there bleached, white by age and corruption. Arms and weapons of all kinds were intermingled with the bodies. It was the most ghastly sight imaginable. I soon had the priceless treasures safely stored away in the strong box of my residence. Then I collected the weapons and piled them up in one of the many cells surrounding the main hall. Next I dug a pit for the entire mass of the mouldered remains. Without any special reason at the time, I spent all my leisure hours in setting the extensive subterranean vault in order, clearing and cleaning away the dense cobwebs and accumulated dust. Now, however, I found it fortunate that I had taken all this trouble. It was the place—and a more appropriate one could not be found in the world—appointed by me for the meeting of the Anti-Messiah's Conclave.

At midnight from the 3d to the 4th of April had been set aside for the auspicious event. I had placed myself inside the dilapidated lodge, keeping watch at the wicket, from whence I could spy over the dis-

tance without being seen myself. Presently a torch-light was beheld emerging from far away. As it came nearer it revealed a muffled and hooded figure—the face masked, showing nothing but the eyes and the month. “Who goes there?” I accosted the comer. He leaned forward and whispered in my ear: “The Despot.” I admitted him and showed the way to the vault. I brought him back, however, to act now as a guide to the other comers. These emerged out of the dark, all attired as the first and in the following order: Priestcraft, Ignorance, Superstition, Lechery, Drunkenness, Barbarity, Jew-hater, Lie, Avarice, Corruption, Malice, Blasphemy, and Seducer. These fourteen were my head agents. Then came a host of petty helpers and assistants. As the clock struck one all were in their seats. I, their master, presided over the conclave and now addressed them as follows:—

“Companions, Masters and Fellow-crafts:—You were called here together to receive, before my necessary departure from the continent, such instructions for upholding, propagating and fostering the cause of evil, by which alone now the supremacy of the Throne and Church may be restored and maintained in their pristine powers. We have lost ground to fearful extent by the Reformation, the progress of the people in science, art and education. Perhaps our greatest enemy has been the printing-press, with its accursed multiplication of books, magazines and newspapers. Great as our late discomfitures have been all over Europe, still more immense dangers loom up across the ocean, where the American people have risen in revolt and threaten to establish a free republic, separating State and Church and maintaining eternal liberty by the power of self-government. To foil this result my immediate presence is absolutely necessary in that accursed country. Receive

therefore your commissions, which must guide and direct you during my necessary absence. Foremost of all, act together as a phalanx in your individual and collective aims and works. Keep united against the people. They are always separated in their best interest. Disunion among them is our everlasting strength. Never despair on account of momentary failure. If foiled, start with new courage and rise again. And now receive each one your separate and distinct charge. Stand up as called. *Despot* and *Priestcraft*—for you, my head chiefs, are one in object and purpose—I appoint you here my vicegerents over the Eastern world while I shall be away in the West. Become as one soul and one body. Strain every nerve to maintain supremacy of absolute power. Let neither blood, tears nor death daunt you. Avoid concessions, rights and privileges. Where you must give way to rights and privileges, where you must concede these temporarily, use craft, wile and machination to annul what you have granted. Every other of you, my associates and friends, at all times and under all circumstances lend your services readily and eagerly to these your masters. Especially, thou noble companion of my trust, *Ignorance*, rise and hear thy task: Fight inch by inch every encroachment upon thy realm. Grapple with education and learning among the masses. Combat Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. Enlightenment is our worst foe. The more stupid and illiterate the nations, the easier they are held in subjugation. Stand forth, *Superstition*, darling pet of my ambition! Waft thy ghostly hand from hut to palace. Spread thy wings over the minds. Draw everywhere the shades of night. Shackle men from the cradle to the grave. Next, thou pale and emaciated *Lechery*, come on! Hold steadfast in thy grasp the easily aroused carnal

passion of our foes. Truckle to their vile sins and desires. Excite their gross imaginations. As long as they shall serve thee, every danger for their rising, their advancement, their progress is at abeyance. Next, thou foremost of my allies, *Drunkenness*, approach! Thy power is gigantic, thy realm the universe. Of all my efficient subordinates thou hast been the most faithful, pliant and successful. Continue thy work of debasing and ruining the races. Insinuate thyself more and more, wider and wider into all ranks, conditions and positions. As long as thy maddening spell holds possession over thy maudlin victims, our reign is yet secure! The intoxicating cup is the prop of Tyranny and Fanaticism. Thou, poor, misshapen *Barbarity*, come forth! Although thy brow is low, thy lips are thick, thy hands are coarse and thy head and body vulgar and mean in appearance, yet art thou one of my chief powers. They have pressed thee hardest of all my friends, have wrestled more tenaciously with thy power than any others. Thy losses everywhere have been great and extensive. Yet stand up courageously for thy hold on the power left. Fight them yet wherever a chance offers. Burn, tear, crunch, pierce, bite, pound, murder everything and anything where thou mayest, so as to regain as much as possible of thy lost vantage-ground. Ah, but now rise, my ever faithful, ever wary, ever zealous friend and right-handed ally, glorious, successful *Jew-hater!* Though in disguise like the rest of thy comrades, I recognize in thee a brave, bold champion. Proceed in thy work. Never let up against that thrice-hated Semitic tribe. They and their accursed Torah are at the bottom of all our troubles. Wherever thou mayest, smite them hip and thigh. As one sham accusation against them goes down, revive another. Never mind the falsity

of the malicious charges. Keep on to make the people hate, despise and persecute them with the mean pretences of their usury, greediness and avarice. Let them be cursed as Christ-killers. Malign them with the Blood-accusation, the poisoning of the wells. As foolish and wicked as these are, they never fail to find credence with the ignorant masses. These Hebrews are in our way for their unfaltering monotheism, their unswerving morals, their love of freedom, their superior minds, the frugality, perseverance and industry of their men, by which they are successful everywhere; the chastity, domestic virtues and fidelity of their women, all of which preserves and perpetuates the race in spite of what I, the Anti-Messiah, have attempted for their annihilation. Thy brother, *Lie*, will valiantly help thee. Come forth, thou brave champion of error and falsehood! Thy swift feet travel a mile before thy antagonist, Truth, even starts for a journey. Continue to falsify history, records and men. Instill thy wanton errors in philosophy, science and art. Lie about God, lie about men, lie against virtue, patriotism, and lie about truth! In this let your twin-brothers, *Avarice*, *Corruption*, *Malice* and *Blasphemy*, stand chivalrously by thy side. Never swerve, never falter to the utmost for tearing down Right, Justice, Honor and Enlightenment. And ye, the host of Vice and Degradation, Gambling, Traducer, Malign Blackmailer, Glutton! all powers of evil and hell, keep together, aiding and abetting one another in your machinations and intrigues to force under the onward procession of Progress and Civilization. Give a good report of yourselves while I am away, that I may bless the day when I met you here for the last time. And now that the morning hour is dawning, farewell! Depart to your different stations

and abodes as silently as you came. My best hopes for success be with you!"

The assembly dispersed as stealthily and noiselessly as it had been ushered in. At noon next day, the 5th of April, I was on board of the man-of-war Challenger. My friends, Rabbi Perez Mendes and his lovely daughter Judith, had already arrived there before me.

Section V.—The Phantom of the Sea.

We were now three days at sea. The weather proved auspicious; the ocean was like a plate of glass, and the good craft, strong and buoyant, made great sailing headway. Myself and Rabbi Mendes had experienced no inconvenience thus far on our journey, and spent most of our time on the top deck. Judith suffered for the first few days with the illness usually affecting travellers on the briny deep. During this time she kept her room and bed, cared for faithfully by the nurse belonging to the ship.

Our conversation was earnest and engrossing. That man held me spellbound with the intensity of his convictions and the power of his broad, irresistible logic, to me a new philosophical theology. Ancient and modern learning were at his command, and my sophistry and flimsy pretences tore like cobwebs under his clear-cut reasoning and incontrovertible arguments. These he interspersed with a most enrapturing fund of legendary lore from the Hebrew writers, among which the wonderful traditions concerning the prophet Elijah fascinated me with their great interest. To Mendes an eternal and absolute separation of Church and State was the only solution of the problem for the enfranchisement of civilized humanity. God himself had demonstrated years ago this truth by the dissolution of the nation-

ality of the Jews, leaving to them the maintenance and fostering of the Law in the ages of their exile. For this purpose visibly had they been spared and preserved by Providence under the most excruciating trials and persecutions. Their supreme mission was making the knowledge of One God universal, in opposition to the towering obstacles from within and without their spheres. The moral code emanating from this chief axiom, as taught by Moses and the Prophets, was simply the sequence of that knowledge. The extensive systems of ceremonial in which the Orient had wrapped the truth are inessentials only, and one after another most likely would fall when absolutely untimely and impracticable, especially in the new land of America. This, however, will prove no injury or obstruction to the great final goal. Those who had formerly maltreated and hunted down the Hebrew people would at no very distant time be the foremost to take them friendly by the hand and become chief aiders for the promulgation of Monotheism as expounded in the Torah. Was it the truth, or the peculiar sympathetic manner in which it was delivered, or both, which fastened their hold so strangely upon me? I could not resist listening, perfectly overcome in my previous convictions and directly contrary views. Often I felt my murderous instincts rise in all their vicious strength within me, propelling me to grasp the terribly earnest man and hurl him headlong overboard into the ocean. Why did I not do it? Why did I not make an end of words that pierced me to the very heart, lacerating my soul, my feelings, the very essence of my being? Several times I was at the decisive point, but my arms fell like palsied, my will as if shattered by an invisible, an incomprehensible power. It was on the thirtieth evening, at a point when I felt as if I could break through all trammels which thus

far had prevented my fiendish design—I had actually risen and made ready to spring with one fell effort upon my unsuspecting victim—when Judith appeared before us, holding a scrap of paper in her hand, and like an etherealized being stood there, exclaiming: “Darling father, let me read these few lines to you; they have come to me like an inspiration. I know you both will smile at the childish verses.” Then she began reading, as he and I had approvingly nodded willing assent:

THE ORIGIN OF THE DIAMOND.

AN ORIENTAL LEGEND.

Listen to the curious story,
 How the diamond in its glory
 Grew amidst the giant blocks
 In the strata of the rocks:
 How the precious stone was wrought
 From a spark of light and thought;
 Love-light shining on this earth,
 In a tear the gem had birth.
 Thought to love and light obedient
 Its most pure and prized ingredient.
 As from presence of the Lord,
 Satan and his rebel horde
 By ambition wild and fell,
 Hurl'd were into deepest hell—
 Doomed to fire, fear and pain,
 Without sunshine, light or rain—
 Mercy, the bright angel, crept
 To the throne of God and wept
 A hot tear, in deep prostration
 E'en for Hades' re-salvation.
 As an emblem it was wrought
 To proclaim sublimest thought:
 God will, says the precious stone,
 Every sin at last atone.
 Crystalized, proclaims the tear
 Final quench of fire and fear:
 Heaven's promise, Mercy's token,
 Are, like diamonds, never broken.

She recited the lines with such simplicity and yet with such deep-felt pathos, that when she ended, her father rapturously hugged her to his breast, and amidst a shower of kisses led her back to the state-room. I was wonderfully and deeply moved. These words from the lips of a child struck a chord in my breast to which I had been a stranger beyond my memory. Like one dazed I walked the deck—it must have been for hours—repeating the refrain :

“ Heaven’s promise, Mercy’s token,
Are, like diamonds, never broken.”

I was awakened from the trance-like state by the ship’s bell striking midnight. This sounded to me like the tolling for a funeral. The muffled footsteps of the guards below, walking to and fro, completed the delusion. I stood up here alone, viewing the wide expanse of the ocean, with its heaving and regular swell coming and going. Myriads of stars twinkled in the sky and were reflected like glittering crystals by the sea. At the centre of this grand picture now became visible a fleck of light of most beautiful color. Having attracted my attention, I watched its gradual growth. This soon assumed the shape of a ring, and then expanded and increased until at last there stood before me an immense ball of blood-tinted fire. The moon in all her majesty, as she only can be seen on the ocean in a clear night, came nearer and nearer until she stood right over the ship above my head. She lit up the heavens and the water with that peculiar pale and roseate tint which transforms darkness into semi-day. I was disturbed in my reverie by the sudden appearance in mid-air of a gigantic person whom I instantly recognized as the prophet Elijah—identically the same in form and features as the one who had hurled me thousands of years ago from the Levannah

back to earth. His aspect, then full of fierce wrath, now was mild and gracious. Nor was he alone. On his right rested, confiding and affectionate, a diminutive figure, unmistakably hunchbacked. This second person's face was characteristically Semitic and made conspicuous by short, pointed chin-whiskers. He held in his right hand an open folio, in which flamed in letters of gold the words "Mendelsohn's German Translation of the Bible." On the left side of the ancient seer stood another, a poet-like, imposing figure. His countenance could not be mistaken; it was expressively Teutonic. He, too, held in his right hand an open book, in which the title-inscription formed a flambeau of light. It read: "Lessing's Nathan the Wise." Nearer and nearer they approached until in hailing distance. Suddenly I saw the prophet by my side; then he spoke:—"Balaam ben Beor, the end of thy malediction is at hand. Soon thou wilt be permitted again to die. As in time of yore thou hast been called upon to curse but by Divine power wast forced to bless, so shall thy blasting career end when thy feet tread the holy ground of new-rising Freedom. What was begotten by malediction shall be finished in benisons. Depart in peace!" I stared intently on him; my breath came panting and heavy. At last I broke forth as one in the agony of despair and asked: "What of the blighting agencies I left to work abroad?" He slowly and deliberately answered: "Leave their destinies in the hands of Him who sent me! In God's good time, when the measure of sin and crimes shall be full, mankind shall see final redemption by Heaven's grace, in the universal reign of Enlightenment, Liberty and Humanity. Depart in peace—depart in peace!" Then the trio of this supernatural night-vision rose upward, higher and higher, until they reached again the precincts of the

moon. During all the time the air was full of celestial music. Over and over again came back to my obtuse hearing the refrain, as if echoed from above :

“ Crystalized, proclaims the tear
Final quench of fire and fear :
Heaven’s promise, Mercy’s token,
Are, like diamonds, never broken.”

At daylight the guards found me lying near the mainmast prostrated and unconscious. They carried me carefully to my room, and informed my friends of the strange disaster which had befallen me. Rabbi Mendes came at once, and Judith followed soon. They were dumbfounded at my changed appearance—so wan, haggard and weak. The ship’s doctor, after working over me for a long time, at last brought me back to a state of consciousness. I could recognize persons and things around me, and with great exertion speak a few words. Everybody was assiduously attentive in ministering to my wants and comfort, but no one more so than Judith. She was tireless in her never-ceasing efforts for my relief and help, and her sweet, womanly ways accomplished everything without obtrusion or bustle. As her soothing hands passed me the medicaments, dried my perspiring brow and smoothed the pillows, she stood over me like a guardian angel, then in my half dazed state there came back to me the piercing recollection of the cruel wrongs which I had heaped upon her race and the vile crime which I came so near perpetrating against her only protector—my friend and help in this hour of need—her father. Then the tears would involuntarily well up to my now dimmed eyes ; and she—she would dry them, speaking comfort and consolation, as if sent to me from Above like a messenger of peace. So day after day rolled away. I grew a little stronger, and one

evening, when the ocean atmosphere was bracing and exhilarating, I was carried on deck, having my emaciated form propped with soft cushions and supporting pillows. As I was laid down on one of the lounges, the captain came and spoke a few sympathetic words, and ordered the mariners and soldiers to a distance, that nothing should disturb my quiet. Rabbi Mendes and Judith were by my side. It was a glorious evening; the sun was just setting with indescribable sublimity in the western horizon, clothing sky and water with a halo of rainbow colors. Now the maiden held one of my hands in her own. By an instinctive impulse I begged her to sing to me. She complied with smiling readiness, and soon the silver-clear tones of her fine voice rang over the ship. It was a simple melody to the words of her own poem :

“God will, says the precious stone,
Every sin at last atone.”

As the final words came like a zephyr's breath from her lips, the watchman placed on top of the mainmast shouted out “Land ahoy!” All this acted like a charm upon me. I rose from my couch—I could stand upright—and firmly walked a few steps forward. Then, to the astonishment of my friends, whom I now faced like one inspired, I exclaimed, in loud but tremulous tones: “Now is the mystery of strange words explained. Now do I understand the last and mystic sentence of Scripture, heretofore a sealed secret to the human mind. All of it is light and life in that portentous prophecy—the last of Holy Writ—fulfilled by my career and long and terrible experiences. It is the promise of God, saying: *Behold, I will send to you the prophet Elijah, before the great and awful day of the Lord cometh. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to their child-*

ren, and the hearts of the children to their fathers! The reign of Tyranny shall soon be ended; the sway of Intolerance must cease. The Kingdom of God is at hand! No mortal power dare gainsay it.

Pen owo w'hikysi es ho-orez cherem.

פֶּן אָבוֹא וְהִכִּיתִי אֶת הָאָרֶץ חֵרֶם

LEST I COME AND SMITE THE EARTH WITH A CURSE!"—(Malachi iii. 24.)

All on board of our ship now became bustle and excitement. The captain and officers shouted orders to the mariners and soldiers. Everything was made ready for landing. The sailors were busy arranging the multifarious rigging. A squad of them were eagerly engaged preparing to lower the anchors by means of working the capstan. The peculiar and characteristic "hoi-ho," half song, half shout, came from every quarter of the boat. Soon we landed in Delaware Bay in sight of Cape May. The captain's gig brought us without much delay to terra-firma. Although the country before us was in the hands of our Federal foes, thanks to the passports which the American representative in England kindly had provided for our party, we were permitted to land without molestation.

Section VI.—The Declaration of Independence.

Desirous of proceeding immediately to our destination, which for me was the old Quaker city of Philadelphia, a government conveyance was placed at our disposal. No other could have been procured for love or money, as every sailboat, cutter or schooner that plied the waters of the bay or river was impressed in the service of the rebel army. Official despatches having arrived from England by the man-of-war which brought us over, a special and swift

cutter was to proceed early next morning to the headquarters of the yet provisional government. So, after a good night's rest, we were on board at day-break. The morning was grandly beautiful, and we bowled along leisurely with a favorable wind. It was early on the 3d of July when we started. I stood the journey wonderfully well, feeling rejuvenated by the balmy land breezes and the beautiful scenery which surrounds on all sides the bay and river of Delaware. My friends were enchanted to see me recuperating so unexpectedly. Next day, July 4th, shortly before noon, we landed in Philadelphia at the foot of Water Street, making fast to the commodious and well-thronged dock, presenting a fine picture of shipping life. We soon found our way to the city. This was in a perfect uproar—all the church bells ringing, minute guns firing, bunting and flags waving from every housetop and window. A compact mass of humanity in holiday attire, and with countenances expressing joy, happiness and satisfaction, streamed in one direction. We were caught in this rush, which never stopped in its onward march until reaching the front of a massive-looking stone edifice. This was, as we learned on inquiry, the State House, commonly known as "Carpenter's Hall." A perfect sea of faces filled the entire square in front of it. We had been hustled near to the steps leading to the edifice. Presently the wide portals opened just as the clock from the dome above us struck twelve. A large number of grave and stately men issued forth, led by one more portly and tall than all the rest. They formed themselves into a very picturesque group, ranging down to the foot of the stairs. Their leader, standing in the entrance of the portal, held in his hand a long parchment scroll. This he unrolled and showed its inner contents to the people. It was a closely

written, beautiful manuscript-document, signed at the end with many signatures. Then bringing it close before his eyes, he commenced to read with sonorous, stentorian voice :

“THE UNANIMOUS DECLARATION OF THE THIRTEEN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED.

“When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with one another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature’s God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

“We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that when any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.”—

I would hear no more. Quietly and stealthily I slunk away. My friends did not notice my going; they were too much interested in the reading of the ponderous instrument, the very beginning of which upset all previously conceived notions of monarchical government. This was either Treason or Liberty. Quickly I pushed through the crowd and

made my way with all possible haste to the suburbs. I wandered wearily about as long as my feet would carry me. Soon I entered the primeval forest, which lay boundlessly before me. Towards night I felt famished and agonized with thirst. Luckily I met with a shepherd driving his flock. I begged him for a morsel of food. He shared his supper with me and gave me drink from his earthen jug. Then I proceeded, walking on until tired nature would no longer permit the exercise of my limbs. I lay down under a mighty elm tree, whose leafy crown offered shelter. Here I slept until broad daylight. There was an abundance of wild berries around me. With these I stilled my teasing appetite. I always kept in my pocket a strong-bladed knife. With it I now cut a fine sapling and trimmed it for a walking-stick. Further on I wandered, not knowing nor caring whence or whither; all I craved for now was to get away—hide myself from mankind. Often I passed a solitary house or a small settlement. Everywhere they made inquiry for news from the war. I pretended utter ignorance, but bought or begged for nourishment. They looked upon me as one demented. And well they might. My appearance could certainly be nothing less than that of a maniac. Thus I went on—how long I do not know. Arrived one day upon a high bluff, an insane desire propelled me to climb down into the deep gulch beneath. After many hairbreadth escapes I reached at last the bottom of the gulch. Prospecting around for some hours, I found this wondrous cave. I determined to pass here the rest of my days in solitude and the fascinating dreams which now came frequently upon me. Sometimes I made long excursions in every direction. On one of these I found, miles away, a small settlement of woodchoppers. They were very poor. One of them was especially

destitute, having a large family dependent upon him for support. I employed him to do errands for me to the far-off city. Through him I supplied myself with tools, books, a timepiece—in fact, everything I wanted. I had ample means and paid him well for his trouble. Whatever he brought I myself carried back to my haunts, declining his urgent offer to accompany me and bear the burdens. Nobody knew whence I came nor where I dwelt. I warned all never to follow me, as I certainly would shoot any one with the gun which I now always carried when coming to the settlement. I forbade them strictly to talk to me about the war, its progress or results; it was hateful to me to hear anything mentioned concerning it. The first thing I provided for myself was a plentiful supply of paper, quills and ink. I was anxious to have the means of whiling away some of my lonesome hours with writing. Soon I should have enough of this to do. But I must spend some time first in constructing some rude furniture, to make my cave habitable. A table, a few chairs and a low couch on which to sleep were soon ready for use, as I was skilled in the use of tools. A supply of leaves and moss was then gathered to soften my hard resting-place.

Section VII.—The Recluse of the Mountains.

What became of my friends I never knew, but can readily imagine their consternation and painful disappointment when surprised by my sudden absence and non-return to their company. They could not stay long in Philadelphia, as they were anxiously expected in New York, their new home. How my old heart pined and longed to behold only once more the angelic face of dear Judith, the venerable countenance of Rabbi Mendes. But this, I am afraid, will never more be granted to me.

It could not have been many months of my dwelling in this solitary habitation, when one night I was aroused from my slumbers by that terrific atmospheric disturbance fully related in the opening chapter of this story, inclusive of the subsequent incidents and events which are comprised in the pages of this book, bringing the narrative of my strange life down to the present moment. My task is nigh completed. I daily have grown more and more feeble. Yet I have succeeded in writing with my cramped fingers the long, long annals of the gradual evolution of human civilization, until Truth, Right and Liberty at last are realized. But oh, how I do now long for the end to come! How I pray that these eyes may close, that the aching heart may be finally stilled forever! Yet it seems my time has not arrived. There is still something to transpire which keeps me here, which makes my life linger on.

I cannot now remember how many years I have been the miserable Recluse of these lonely mountains. My memory has grown even more senile than my body. To-night—that much I recollect—is the 19th of October, 1781. While I wrote the last pages of my biographical reminiscences, but an hour ago, I began to feel especially sad, melancholy and apprehensive. My eyes are now involuntarily directed to yonder wall of record. Lo! it lights up again, it appears radiant; its dimensions grow to an enormous size. Now it represents a battlefield! A halo of indescribable brilliancy illuminates the scene. It represents the grand finale of the War of Rebellion.

The contending armies form the background of the grand tableau. The men have stacked their guns; several are seen in friendly confab; they unmistakably fraternize among themselves. Two

heroic forms stand in front. Old, proud Lord Coruwallis presents his sword in surrender to the other, a tall, majestic-looking soldier, the great, immortal George Washington. Though proud in mien and distinguished in attitude, he receives the weapon in humility and sorrowful dignity. The last great act of the historical drama of the colonial war is consummated: *Great Britain and Monarchy prostrate; the United States of America, the Republic and Freedom, triumphant!*

Suddenly a great change in my cavern takes place. A fierce commotion rages in the bowels of the earth. The mountains overhead rock. The earth quakes. The oscillations of the ground are fearfully long and terrible in their intervals of suspense. A sheen of the dawning morning creeps through the entrance of my cave. This grows and increases until it becomes gorgeously brilliant with light. Behold there stands once again the vision of the prophet Elijah. Looking compassionately upon me for an instant, he exclaims: "*The reign of Liberty and Tolerance at last has commenced! By their united power the Kingdom of God is coming. Truth, Right and Humanity will sway victorious over this land. A self-governing nation is born, amidst whom all creeds will live in peace together. No more oppression! No more persecution! The tyrant's and fanatic's work is finished. Thy end is nigh. Thy friends are coming. Depart in peace!*" Then he is gone. A great agony overwhelms my soul. I know the crisis of my shadow-life has come at last. I feel sure that this horrible, awful, weary existence will soon ebb away. Now it seems to me as if celestial voices fill the air, and the softest, sweetest harmony is breathed into my consciousness. The cadence of this to me so familiar refrain, in wonderfully pathetic, soul-stirring strains, comes and goes :

“Heaven’s promise, Mercy’s token,
Are, like diamonds, never broken.”

Then, as if my soul at last had burst its prison-chains of malediction, I cry out the Psalm words (cxviii.), now crowding upon my memory: “In my deep distress I called unto the Lord and He answered me!”

ADDENDUM II.

Missing Links Found.

The foregoing words from King David’s songs are the last on the final page of the manuscript written by the Recluse. Towards the end the chirography becomes nearly illegible; trembling and faintness of the fingers are visible in every letter. Appended to the writings are several sheets in entirely different penmanship and style. Their contents explain and fill out some portions of the Recluse’s narrative and complete it by giving the final catastrophe, with which ends the career and existence of the “Wandering Gentile.” So they form a necessary adjunct to this story, and are therefore published in connection therewith as its closing and final episode.

THE EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

Section VIII.—The Last Episode. Rabbi Perez Mendes’ Story.

By the pressing and anxious desire of my dear daughter Judith, I, Rabbi Mendes, use some leisure-hours occurring but sparsely in my arduous duties, to place on record some incidents connected with my personal experiences. They have reference to the Manuscript-story, which has come into our possession as a legacy from the author, and to some extent explain and complete that curious and interesting work.

We had become intimately acquainted several years ago with the mysterious author, who had shown feelings of real friendship for myself and daughter. Crossing the ocean together on our coming to America, we reached Philadelphia on the 4th of July, 1776, and were just in time to have the great fortune of hearing the Declaration of Independence read at high noon from the steps of the State House. Absorbed with keenest interest in the contents of that memorable document, neither of us noticed the sudden disappearance of our fellow-traveller, who was lost, no doubt, amidst the dense crowd which had assembled during the ringing of bells and the booming of cannon. Our friend, so unexpectedly missing, had experienced several days ago a severe spell of sickness and was barely convalescent then. So our anxiety and concern about him can readily be imagined. We hunted all day for the lost one, but in vain. Next day I employed the police officials to assist us in our search, but to no avail. Advertisements in the newspapers brought no better results. Not a trace of him could be discovered. It seemed as if he had vanished from the earth. I lost a whole week in the fruitless effort to find him. Then my departure became imperative, as I was anxiously expected in New York. Arriving there safely, and after a warm welcome and installation into my ministerial office, I still continued my efforts and engaged the help of many friends to unearth the whereabouts of our deeply mourned Ben Beor. But all without success. Time passed on quickly and the stirring events of the war with England made us at last forget the hapless person in whom we had taken such deep interest. Judith was soon wooed and won by one of the wealthiest and best of New York merchants, an influential member of my congregation and a congenial companion, who shared with me the

same boundless enthusiasm for the now struggling cause of the young Republic. We idolized George Washington, with whom we became personally and intimately acquainted, serving him financially and in many other and important ways. This was widely and publicly known. When, therefore, unfortunately reverses of the most trying and bitter kind overtook the ill-disciplined and easily disorganized American militia, it became necessary about the middle of September, 1776, for the undaunted commander to evacuate New York. The city was immediately taken possession of by the British under General Howe. A large number of treacherous Tories, who had kept under cover until then, let themselves loose upon all patriotic citizens; security of property and life for us unfortunates ceased to exist. Being among the most hated and singled out for persecution and brutal treatment, myself, daughter and her husband found it necessary to seek safety by flight. Shelter and security being offered us by friends in Albany, we escaped successfully from the hard-trying metropolis and reached, after many difficulties, hardships and dangers, our place of refuge. The journey thither took nearly a week. Here we enjoyed the generous hospitalities and kindest treatment at the hands of our Jewish compatriots and remained till nearly the end of the war. At last, when all danger was considered over, on the morning of October 19th, 1781, we took the stage, then the only conveyance, for our return to the now liberated city of New York. This journey through the yet scantily explored southern counties of the State ordinarily took about four days. The primitive highway, since the arrival of peaceful times, is obliterated and forgotten. The road was built by and at the expense of neighboring communities.

On the second night of this fatiguing travel an

unexpected accident occurred to us. The stage had reached by this time the acclivity leading over Mount Riga, which we must traverse. The horses labored pantingly up the serpentine road which gradually led to the pinnacle of the wooded highlands. We had snugly ensconced ourselves in the lumbering stage and had dozed away during the slow and wearisome progress of the team. The night was intensely dark. As we neared the top of the high hill all were suddenly and rudely awakened from our slumbers. The coach, without any previous warning, was overthrown, and we found ourselves, bruised and sore, pitched in the road. The horses acted like frenzied, and after snorting, cavorting and rearing wildly, succeeded in breaking loose from the battered and nearly demolished vehicle and ran frantically away. The ground trembled and heaved. We heard the giant pines and oaks of the surrounding forest snap like reeds. It was the most fearful earthquake that ever had convulsed this region. Presently all became silent. Thus we found ourselves so unexpectedly placed upon this peculiar hillside. When the first shock of the awful occurrence had passed, we made a hasty survey of our untoward position. The driver, who foresaw the catastrophe, had sprung from his seat and was but little hurt. When sufficiently recovered and composed, a consultation took place to decide what was best to be done under the hapless circumstances. Without assistance it was clear that it was impossible for us to proceed. No regular conveyance became due till the following night, and other travel there was none.

We finally decided that nothing could be attempted for the present but to make ourselves comfortable for the rest of the night as circumstances would permit. Judith and her husband crept back into the coach,

which was righted with great difficulty for that purpose. I and the driver made ourselves easy with our great-coats and with cushions from the seats as pillows, lying down on the bare ground. Sleepless the dark night wore away. With the first dawn of morning we all arose. The driver of the coach volunteered to find the next settlement, from whence to bring assistance. He soon started on this errand and left us to while away the time as best we might. The sun had fully risen now and revealed a wild yet sublime landscape. Imagine who can our astonishment when in this forlorn position we all at once were startled by hearing from the deep gulch below, in clear yet quivering tones, like the trembling voice of an aged man, the distinctly pronounced words of Psalm cxviii. 4, sung in a familiar tune: "In my great distress I called upon the Lord and He answered me!" For some time we listened and stood with folded hands and upturned eyes. The voice had long since died away amidst the wakened echoes of the hills, yet there we stood in the attitude described, when presently Judith pointed to a spot near our left, thus far unnoticed. It revealed steps cut into the side of the rock, leading downwards. Forthwith all three of us were there, and to our amazement saw a well-worn footpath leading to the yet undiscernible depth. Holding one another by the hand, the young husband in advance, we carefully descended step by step, often trembling lest our feet might slip on the ground covered with the hoar frost of autumn. This would hurl us headlong to the bottom. Thus we finally reached the foot of the hill. But greater surprises were yet in store for us. Through the narrow lane which we saw at some distance away from us, rolled in mirror-like placidity the clear, silvery waters of a rivulet. We proceeded thither. At the crystalline bottom of the little stream

we could see an endless number of piscatorial tenants of all sizes and colors disport themselves amidst the pebbles and moss-covered stones which had rolled in there plentifully from the heights. In front of us was a wide opening into the hill, and as we directed our glances to this portal of the mountain, a sight was revealed which dazzled our eyes. An immense cave was lying open before us, wherein stalactites of all forms and shapes glistened and glinted in the sheen of a lamp which hung burning from the ceiling. The appearance of the whole place resembled some of those apartments in Oriental palaces described with such flambent imagination in the story of the Arabian Nights. We hesitatingly entered. The ground was perfectly dry, hard, remarkably smooth and level. As soon as our sight became accustomed to the peculiar light which was shed over the whole surroundings, we beheld near where the lamp was suspended, lying on a litter of leaves and moss, a most venerable-looking man. His long beard and flowing hair, both silver white, came into conspicuous notice. He slowly lifted his head and rose with painful exertion to a sitting posture. His sunken eyes glistened brightly, though his body shook and trembled. With audible, but quivering voice he cried: "Come right in, dear people! I knew you would be here! I have expected you, oh so long! Night after night have I seen you come in my dreams. I have beheld all this. I knew God would not forsake me in my last hours. I recognize you well. Lady, you are dear Judith, my poet friend. Thou, reverend sir, art Rabbi Perez Mendes—the same faces and features that are so affectionately impressed on my memory. But there are three of you; I knew of only two. Well, be seated; there is room for all. The supreme moment of my departure from earth is at hand.

Listen to the last wish and final bequest of your old friend, now a dying man."

We newcomers, who stood aghast at seeing the strange apparition, hearing the still stranger words, mechanically took the seats to which we were motioned by the bony, withered hands. My daughter and I recognized our dear, long lost and now so strangely found friend. Then, "Ben Beor," for it was he, continued to speak, tremblingly-broken and often gasping for breath:—"It is now many years since I have lost myself here and became a Recluse in these mountains. How many years I do not remember. Here I have lived the life of a dreamer. My few wants were easily supplied. Yonder brook gave me drink; fish, roots and berries supplied food. I studied the books you see lying around. There are also the tools with which I worked. My existence has been one continued hallucination and trance-like vision. While these were upon me I wrote the story of my life. Ever since this was finished, and repeatedly before, I saw you, dear friends, come to me once more, to renew the old and deeply cherished memory. Now mark attentively my words: There lie the rolls of my manuscript. I have sealed them up into two packages. Take them now! I make you conjointly my heirs and testators. It is my last will that the seals of the packages shall never be broken until peace in this country is fully established. After this has come to pass, read together the curious annals. And now take my hand in token that you accept the trust and will scrupulously comply with my wishes. You, dear sir, whom I do not know, be our witness that my dying request is granted! And now, since you all have signified that you are sacredly pledged in accepting my last testament, take the rolls—depart! Stay not another moment! An earthquake last night

has broken several pillars that uphold this immense cavity. Repeatedly all here has shaken and trembled. Presently the mountain-side above us will be crushed and crumbled. Flee, therefore, from here, flee for your lives! Begone, quick, quick—else it will be too late—too late!”

The speaker fell back exhausted. We felt indeed a strong and continuous tremor pervade the whole atmosphere. Certainly there was no time to lose. We begged and entreated the Recluse to make an effort and come away with us. We two men bent over him, attempting to lift and carry him away. But he, with a struggle not expected in one so aged and failing, resisted. “Fools!” he yelled at the top of his unearthly voice, “shall we all die? Kiss me but once on my forehead, my angel, my Judith, then begone—quick, begone!”

There was no help for it. Judith wept, but she did as bid. Then we snatched the rolls amidst the rumble and rattle caused by some mighty convulsion in the bowels of the earth. We ran for our lives. When reaching the outside we fled to a far-away distance. Now there occurred one terrific, stunning, deafening crash. It buried the Recluse, the cave and all therein, while a column of dust and rocks rose skyward from the rebound of the avalanche of the fallen debris.

Soon afterwards the shouts of our now returning driver were heard by us, the exhausted and deeply moved travellers. He had fortunately met with a party of discharged soldiers who were on their way homeward. We joined them and were conducted to the nearest settlement. Were it not that we had in our possession the two large rolls of manuscripts to testify to the reality, the past events would have been taken by us for a terrible illusion.

The next stage-coach took us to our destination,

where we arrived safely on the following evening. Our lives soon went on in their accustomed smooth and happy way. True to our pledge, the manuscripts were carefully stored away until the war was ended with the recognition by Great Britain of the independence of the Republic as the United States of America. On the 3d of September, 1783, the definite treaty of peace between the two contending parties was signed at Paris in France. On the 18th of October Congress issued the same to the American people. There was rejoicing, glorification, ringing of bells, firing of cannons, and public worship all over the land.

We fitly celebrated the day by breaking the seals of our inheritance, and commenced to read the chapters of the strange and certainly interesting story. It took us nearly all winter to finish it. When this was achieved, I wrote the short sequel which seemed necessary to complete the work. Gladly would I have proceeded at once to have the manuscript printed in book-form, but the financial condition of the country was very much disturbed, and no publisher could be found to undertake so extensive and costly an enterprise. So this must be postponed to a more auspicious time. When this once shall be done it will be an everlasting monument to the memory of our dear, unhappy friend, **BEN BEOR, THE WANDERING GENTILE AND ANTI-MESSIAH.**

THE END.





